

COUNTRY LIFE

THE JOURNAL FOR ALL INTERESTED IN
COUNTRY LIFE AND COUNTRY PURSUITS.

ILLUSTRATED.

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LADY JULIETTE LOWTHER.

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THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits.

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THE LAST CHANCE FOR AFRICAN GAME

WHETHER the big game left in Africa is to vanish or remain depends very largely on the result of the conference now being held at the Foreign Office. Its assembly is evidence that the scramble for Africa is conducted with some regard for the proprieties; and there is good reason to hope for practical results. The meeting of representatives of the great Powers to discuss such a subject at all is evidence of the importance attached to what must be considered a sentimental and recreative side of life; and everyone who has learnt the useful lesson that variety and novelty give a zest to living will wish them well in their efforts to preserve the strange, unfamiliar, and untamed beasts which still survive in the Dark Continent. But the difficulties are great. It is doubtful whether the official mind is wide enough to recognise the general uncommercial interests of their respective nations in this matter. Lord Cromer, whose administration is as wide as his sympathies, will no doubt instruct his representative to act exactly as a sportsman and a naturalist would wish. But even Lord Cromer

will have to frame his views on business lines, and cut his coat according to his cloth. He could not, for example, promise any great measure of State protection for big game in the new districts of the Soudan on the lines of the State Protection of Game in North America, because the funds for that purpose would not be available. On the other hand, the present autocratic government of the Mahdi's late realm enables Sir Francis Wingate to prohibit or regulate hunting very much at pleasure, if he can only enforce his rules.

The Nile valley is not for the moment the area of destruction or of threatened destruction. It is the great *enclave* of British and German East Africa, Northern Mashonaland, Nyassaland, and Portuguese East Africa that the big game still remains. There it must be protected now and immediately, or this planet will lose from its limited fauna forms of life which it will never reproduce. They are supposed and believed to have one mighty friend—the German Emperor. It is to be hoped that his Imperial Majesty may not be misrepresented, and it would be a sentiment in keeping with his wide and practical genius which never neglects the pleasant and the romantic side of life. It is known that it was by his own wish that the mountain of Kilimanjaro was included in the German East African Protectorate cutting “a huge half moon, a monstrous cantleout,” from the adjacent British province, and that the Kaiser did this on the grounds of his special interest “in the fauna and flora of the region.” At present there are enough wild animals in the British Protectorate alone to be a nucleus to re-stock Africa. Only the buffalo seem really to have been killed down by the rinderpest; the rest have not greatly suffered. But if we do not come to terms with our German neighbours, the skin trade may flourish on either side of us to such an extent, that no preserving on our territory can maintain the stock.

Meantime, and before any decision of an international character, we must look to our own East African territories and stop the mischief which has already begun there. The most pressing is that of protecting the most productive area, the new British East African Protectorate opened up by the Uganda Railway. It would be a wicked and useless act to allow this railway to be the means of destroying half of the living interest of this unique region, and we would specially draw the attention not only of the supporters of Imperial expansion there, but also of its critics to this point. Already, even in the last six months, the numbers of many species of the abounding and magnificent fauna which was found when this protectorate was opened up by the railway, and invaded by its organised and admirably equipped army of workers, have greatly diminished. They are being killed mainly for food, but also for the value of their hides. The odious traffic of the skin hunter, which was the commercial cause of the destruction of the Transvaal and Free State game, is just now very remunerative. Hides are worth almost double what they were a few years ago, and the demand for leather still increases. The zebra, sable antelope, gemsbok, wildebeeste, and all the rest of the southern bucks were killed off for this purpose, and that is what will happen next year in our protectorate and British Central Africa if measures are not taken to stop it.

Looked on merely as a matter of business this will not pay. It would be far more remunerative to the government and to its railway to make the new country the Scotland of the big-game shooter, charge him high for licences and sport, and limit him in his bag to male animals and fair heads, and preserve the game for ever. Its value would increase yearly. If one firm, as was the case last year, let £500,000 worth of shootings in Scotland, what would not the value of this unique big-game country amount to in the course of thirty years? Visitors fresh from the district have seen eight different kinds of big game in a day. The animals are still in numbers almost like those which Captain Harris and Gordon Cumming saw at the Cape. Let us keep them, and not allow the protectorate to let our new and costly railway to be run, as a recent resident there said as a “butcher's paradise.”

At the present moment there is a useful set of regulations for game preservation. But regulations are of little use if not backed by proper supervision. At present the authority is divided, and there is no single public officer responsible. The game is a valuable public property, and it would pay us well to maintain a public game warden there, as is done in many States in the Union. At present there are “reserves” in the protectorate which are nominally sanctuaries for the game. The Kenia Kikuyu reserve would, if properly maintained, be of real service. But at present permits are given to public officers to shoot in the reserve, and everyone in authority on the railway considers himself a “public officer,” and the whole body of officials, great and small, can claim to shoot there, and can send their servants to shoot there “to get meat.” Even the reserve thus becomes a sham. Sport is an important item in the health of permanent public officers; but this could be provided by setting aside special areas near their posts, or making a “reserve” for them, as is done for the officers at Aden. Meantime the game warden should be provided, proper fees charged, and in addition

to everyone being given a copy of the regulations, he should be required to sign a personal undertaking to observe them. Each licensee ought also to give in a return of what he has shot, and hand in a written and signed statement. This would be a check on greedy shooters, and furnish a record of the totals of each species killed from year to year. From it special protection could be given, as required, to any species that seemed likely to disappear. This return might well be checked by an export duty on skins and horns. Ivory should be a special subject of international agreement, with the same duty all round on the coast on each pair of tusks. Ivory is so valuable, that until the African elephants are domesticated and bred, as they ought to be, and their tusks only taken after death, as is done in Siam, they will have no rest from killing, and will always raise the commercial question on which game legislation is usually wrecked.



THE whole Empire is keenly anxious that Australian Federation should become an accomplished fact, and all are of one mind in thinking that the present moment, when the colonies have rallied so nobly to the side of the Mother Country, is peculiarly opportune for such a consummation. Emphatically, therefore, the occasion is one on which to introduce difficulties for party purposes, and to use language calculated to produce a sense of grievance in colonial minds, is not the part of a patriotic statesman. Yet that is what Sir Henry Campbell, Bannerman, the titular leader of the Opposition, has not been ashamed to do. The alteration which the Government have seen fit to propose in the Commonwealth Bill is made, not because they are Unionist, Conservative, or Liberal, but because they think it necessary in the interests of the Mother Country and of Australian colonists alike. Therefore to call it "a flouting and rebuff of the representatives of the Australian people," is worse than ill-judged. Violent language of that kind may have no foundation in fact—this has next to none—but it may be mischievous all the same. Little boys provoke their comrades to fight for their amusement by inventing insults supposed to have been offered by one boy to another. But grown statesmen ought to know better.

At the moment of writing there is certainly no cause for complaint, but rather an occasion for great thankfulness and joy concerning the condition of affairs in South Africa. Lord Roberts has accomplished an admirable march, and made a distinct and invaluable advance at very small cost. Sir Redvers Buller has moved at last, and to good purpose. The Boers are clearly dispirited; and even as to Mafeking there seems to be more ground for hope than there has been hitherto. Indeed, we should not be surprised if hope were merged in fruition before these words were printed. Mr. Wyndham's answer in the House of Commons on Monday evening did not for obvious reasons indicate Lord Roberts's scheme of operations; but its phraseology was hopeful and even sanguine.

The relief of Mafeking is not, of course, in itself a matter of first rate importance except from the point of view of sentiment. The truth of the matter is that both Ladysmith and Mafeking represent colossal mistakes on the part of the Boer leaders, and that both of them have served a useful purpose to our cause. They have kept large numbers of Boers bottled up and idle. And, particularly in the case of Mafeking, those Boers have been prevented from playing general mischief by the heroism of a small body of men under the command of a fighting man of many sided talent and courage, when all the while there was nothing on earth to gain except in the form of relief, of personal spite, by taking Mafeking. At the same time, it is not to be denied that Colonel Baden-Powell is at present, and justly, the idol of the British public, and that the capture of Mafeking would wound the feelings of the Empire more than any real loss ten times as great.

Meanwhile, there is a certain grim humour in a telegram which comes from Lorenzo Marques to the *Times* with a fine scriptural flavour about it. As Saul consulted the witch of Endor, so, it is said, Mr. Kruger has asked the advice of a youthful Dutch seer; and the oracle, more direct than that of Delphi, and in tones by no means ambiguous, has replied that the war will be over by the 14th of June, and that within three months of that date Mr. Kruger will die. In what form death will overtake the ambitious despot who has ruined his country, the oracle does not state; and the decision of that question may be said to lie in some measure in Mr. Kruger's own power. The fate foretold by the soothsayer may be inevitable and inexcusable. The manner of its accomplishment clearly depends very much upon how Mr. Kruger conducts himself in the interim. The story, of course, may simply be *ben trovato*; but it is quite likely to be true. The particular form of piety affected by Mr. Kruger, which consists in taking the Deity into his confidence with a familiarity bordering upon insolence, is by no means inconsistent with gross and childish superstition. It is also, as Mr. Kruger has proved in a great number of ways, quite compatible with colossal dishonesty and corruption.

That the end is near is the opinion, not merely of those who watch the progress of events here at home, or of those who are distinctly well disposed to the British cause, but of the intelligent foreigners. Thus, the *Daily Mail* on Tuesday published from its correspondent at Copenhagen, a very significant prophecy by M. Viggo Berck, the commercial agent of the Norwegian Government at Durban, with which we entirely agree: "I believe now that the war will soon come to an end, and that it will prove to have been an inestimable blessing to South Africa. I believe South Africa is now approaching a time when it will blossom as the rose—a time the like of which has not been seen since Australia burst into flower. Since the war began the country has shaken herself free of a crowd of Englishmen living a precarious existence, and in their stead prosperous young Englishmen have come out as Volunteers, and of these surely numbers will settle down in the colony."

But we had forgotten to note an important change in political geography. President Steyn has for the second time within a few weeks changed his capital, and very likely he may have to do it again before the week is out. He may even be driven to use his carriage as he flits from place to place as a moving capital, in which case, let us hope, that a contemporary will not, as it did when Lord Roberts telegraphed from "Cable Cart," complain that the place is not marked on any official map. Meanwhile, in a newspaper, one may be permitted to indulge in a mild printer's joke: "If Mr. Steyn requires many more capitals, he will be driven to the 'lower case.'"

With the month of May, now well advanced, there comes a pretty general movement amongst yachting men to get their vessels afloat, and not a little wailing amongst owners of steam yachts at the enhanced price of coal, high at the moment and with prospects of a further rise. Indeed, some contracts have already been made for the season's supply at £1 12s. 6d. per ton, and discussion is rife as to the wisdom or the reverse of a prompt decision. Of course, this is a terrible price even for the best steam coal, but for our part we believe that expenditure at this rate is not injudicious, and that those who shrink from it now will, when the summer is over, have reason to regret their timidity.

Now that the hawthorn and chestnut are coming out and the wild apple is in full bloom, woodland is assuming a very gay appearance. It is curious, however, what little notice is taken of many blossoms that are as unobtrusive as they are beautiful. Many people, for instance, pass and repass the oak without seeing the millions of pale green flowers now hanging on it. The beeches, too, have a very graceful flower, which is now also at its best. By-the-bye there is the old weather-saw about the ash and the oak. Whatever it may portend, the latter outstripped its rival this year and was covered with breaking leafage while the ash buds still were black enough to remind one of Tennyson's favourite description. The lavishness of every form of wild fruit is this year an object of general conversation. One hopes that neither the forest nor the garden have suffered from the keen frosts. One morning the ground was white with hoar frost, and on a certain pond the ice was nearly half an inch thick.

With a change to more genial and May-like weather all would be stir and bustle on the magnificent Westmeath lakes—perhaps the most glorious venue in the world for that particular method of trout fishing known as "dapping." A great many anglers make the town of Mullingar their headquarters for the May-fly season on the Westmeath lakes, and there they are already installed awaiting the glad tidings that the green drake (or May fly) is "up." The present season is a late one, but with

a change from the harsh dry east wind to a soft southerly breeze this mysterious fly would quickly rise to gladden the hearts of the anglers. According to local observations it is invariably noticed that the blossoming of the lilac and laburnum and the appearance of the May-fly take place together. It is expected that the trout fishing on these lakes will be very good this year, and some fine large fish have already been taken by trolling. Trout up to 17lb. and 20lb. weight have from time to time been caught on Lakes Belvedere and Derravarragh, the largest that was ever taken being over 23lb., and it may be seen in Mullingar still, as it was preserved.

Very soon, unless some measures are taken to preserve him, there will be none left of that singularly local person the Fordwich trout. What he is it is hardly necessary, even as it is hardly possible, to say. He is a species of *salmo*, inhabiting the Kentish river Stour, and that river only. He goes down to the sea, coming up to spawn, like a salmon, and save for the white colour of his flesh one could hardly know him from a salmon proper. He is not very grand eating. Nevertheless, he was once so highly prized that there used to be certain, apparently valuable, rights in his fishing. The township of Fordwich, if we mistake not, had a right to two stake nets, and the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury to another. We are not quite sure about these privileges, nor do they signify. What does signify is that this unique fish has become very scarce, comparatively speaking, in its own and only home, the Stour, that the area of its possible spawning bed is restricted to the space between Fordwich itself and Sturry Mills. There is a fish ladder, it is true, at Sturry, but the fish do not seem to ascend it. It is time to preserve specimens of him in our museums before it be too late.

The gannets on the Bass Rock will have an interesting time of it while they are putting up the proposed lighthouse on that famous old rock fortress. It will be interesting to see how they manage the landing of big blocks of masonry on that crag beside which, even on the calmest day, the surge of the sea is considerable, as all know well who have attempted the landing from a small boat. It is probably for other ends of navigation than the mere avoidance of the great rock itself, that the flash light of 39,000 candle power is designed. It will serve as a guide to ships far out to sea in making the entrance of the Forth. But what will the solemn birds think of this portentous eye winking at them at regular intervals all through the night? It will be curious to see whether the operations and the final arrangements of the light will induce many of them to forsake the nursery to which for countless ages they have returned, with a marvellous fidelity to the annual date.

It seems not unlikely that the prolonged cold of the spring has changed the disposition of the grouse a good deal in some parts of Scotland, sending them down off the high moors to the benefit of the lower ones. The snow lay so long and so late in some parts that the grouse could not live in their usual haunts even well into the breeding time. In consequence, those that sought a lower moor at this moment are likely enough to have stayed to breed there. It may at least have the advantage of bringing in new blood if not of making a notable addition to the previous stock.

The deer are said to have suffered badly, especially hinds and young, on the higher forests, where the snow has been frozen so that they could not stamp their way through to the pasture below. Neither deer nor grouse seem to find snow altogether unendurable if it be tolerably soft, so that they can make their way through it. The hard icy surface is the cruel thing for them. Those deer that have borne the vigour of winter are more advanced in shedding and repairing their horns than could have been expected; but it is to be feared that the pasture will be backward, so that they will be found in poor condition by the stalker.

Life at the Zoo is particularly interesting at the opening of spring. For the last week the ruffs, of which there are three in the western aviary, have been going through the curious antics for which they were famous when the fens were undrained. According to the story of the fen men, the cock birds used to select a dry spot on the marshes, which was called by the fowlers a "hill." On this hill the birds showed off for hours, spreading their ruffs and tilting or fencing with each other. There are three ruffs at the Zoo. Two of these have each made a "hill." One, a black and white bird, seems almost hypnotized. It does not fight with the others, but remains on the same bit of ground nearly all day, but especially early and late spreading its rough, setting up the feathers on either side of the head, and opening and closing the ornamental plumes on either side of the throat and breast. Sometimes it runs forward, using its beak as if in a fencing bout. Then it runs backwards bowing. Sometimes it sits down and spreads its feathers. Sometimes it stands, but places the tip of its beak on the ground, and

remains as if paralysed for minutes. It is a curious performance, and fully explains how the fowlers would catch all the male birds in a fen at this season.

One of the prettiest sights at the Zoo is a pair of infant lemurs, kept in the room at the back of the monkey house, where the most delicate of the arboreal animals are secluded. The two mother lemurs are of a small variety, with soft French grey coats, long furry tails, large brilliant brown eyes, and an orange crescent on their foreheads. Their noses are sharp, like a fox cub's, and they are altogether very engaging animals, about the size of a slender cat. Each has a tiny baby, exactly like itself, only with lighter fur, and eyes larger in proportion. The baby clings round its mother's waist, hanging underneath by the end of the prehensile paws, and perhaps to some extent by the tail. The head looks out exactly over the mother's hip, where the thick fur and bent leg so encircle it that it seems to be peeping from a window.

The main difficulties before the fourteen delegates of the different nations "interested" in African big game arise from the ivory traffic. It is hopeless at present to try to give a close time to elephants in general, mainly because those parts of the continent where they still remain are for the most part not under civilised administration. The elephants are killed in the "hinterlands," and the tusks brought to the coast. The only hope is to come to an agreement that immature elephants shall not be killed, or rather that if they are killed their tusks shall not be allowed to leave the country. Consequently the proposal is to agree on a minimum size of elephants' tusks which shall be allowed to be exported. The Congo State, which is practically a Belgian trading company, is not likely to take quite as liberal a view on this matter as Imperial powers, such as Germany and England. Meantime, the meeting has had good results in enabling those of the delegates who are anxious for an understanding to exchange views. It is believed, for instance, that the German and English plenipotentiaries have agreed that no giraffes shall be killed in the territory of either.

It has been rather unkind of some papers to compare the famous "Gyp" with Lady Florence Dixie. For Lady Florence Dixie's adventure was possible, but "Gyp" seems to have been quite deserted by her wonted cleverness in making up her story, and she has given herself away upon a point of detail so hopelessly that the whole edifice of fiction must fall to the ground in one common ruin. That "Gyp" should be abducted, that she should be locked up in a room in a lonely house, that she should let herself down out of window by the convenient bed-clothes, that she should hurt her knee and her thumb, even that she should see a *gendarmerie* barrack on the roadside, we all confess to be quite possible; but in an interview with the detectives, which she was foolish enough to accept as correct, she may be described as giving herself away with a bunch of carrots. For she represents herself on her forlorn tramp back to Paris as having been driven to tear up carrots from the ground with her dainty fingers, and to gnaw them all uncooked in order to stay the pangs of hunger. That would be all very well if it were possible to find carrots growing in the ground in mid May. But it is not. This season's crop has, says the *Daily News*, been sown in the neighbourhood of Paris only about a fortnight. We should have thought longer. But in any case it can barely be past the cotyledon stage as yet. The *Daily News* suggests that "Gyp" is too good a housekeeper to have mistaken asparagus for carrots, but that perhaps is not the most ingenious explanation. Radishes might do. The result is that a very clever woman's reputation for veracity, which after all does not matter much, and for shrewdness, which matters a great deal, depends entirely on the question whether she is capable of having mistaken a radish for a carrot. We present the idea to her for what it is worth.

Even the ladies, according to a recent report, do things more bluntly in America than elsewhere. A certain Mrs. Perley of Chicago, a well-known club-woman and lecturer, had been the subject of a good deal of ill-natured gossip concerning the proceeds of a lecture which she had delivered, but the actual source of the gossip could not be ascertained. Therefore Mrs. Perley, nothing daunted, summoned all the members of her various clubs to a special lecture, and they attended in their hundreds. To them Mrs. Perley, having explained what had happened to the proceeds of her first lecture, took up her parable thus: "You are a pack of liars and scandalmongers. You have tried to ruin my reputation by circulating slanders of the vilest nature against me, and uttering words any generous-hearted woman would be ashamed to hear uttered against another. I couldn't get at you individually to tell you this, so I tell it to you collectively. Now I am through with you, and you can get out." Thereupon, adds Dalziel's agency, the ladies meekly arose and departed, and the meekness of the ladies is perhaps as astonishing as the brutal frankness of Mrs. Perley.

Sir John Bennett Lawes recently told an interviewer that if he had his time to live over again he would not shut himself up at Rothamstead trying experiments, but would go about among the farmers urging them to adopt more scientific methods. Those who have done the most valuable work often enough feel disappointed when it is nearing the end of the day with them. David Livingstone, for instance, thinking little of what he had achieved, thought his life a failure because he had not discovered the sources of the Nile. Sir John Lawes has been of great service to agriculture. We are not unmindful of that fact when agreeing with him that what the British farmer needs most is someone to ridicule him out of his bad methods. He cannot afford to continue as his forefathers did in these days of vastly increased competition, and yet those who try to drill new ideas into his head find the task as difficult as is conceivable. What a time it has taken to make the dairyman realise that co-operation is a necessity of modern conditions.

Yorkshire farmers are distressed to learn that on June 16th, when the Royal is to be opened in their county town, the authorities, owing to the prevalence of swine fever, have resolved not to admit pigs. They assert that the cases are not numerous; that pedigree swine are not liable to take it; that with proper precaution the danger of infection could be minimised; and that in any event they are willing to take the risk. One cannot but sympathise with them to some extent. The pig is just now an important animal up Yorkshire way, and exclusion from the show spells financial loss to the breeders. If it can be done with safety to the district, we hope the Council will reconsider its decision.

A correspondent in one of the Dublin dailies calls attention to a curious fact in connection with the otter in the Zoo at the

Phoenix Park. He accidentally discovered that *Lutra vulgaris* greedily eats nuts, dropping them into the water, and then picking them out and cracking them as deftly as a monkey. It is pretty certain that nuts are not the natural food of the otter, and this shows how circumstances alter cases. The indiscriminating public who have a hazy sort of idea that nuts are the universal food of all birds, beasts, and fishes in the Zoo, have doubtless not forgotten the otter in their attentions, and Mr. Lutra by accident tried them and found them good. Dogs will sometimes eat blackberries and raspberries eagerly. Otters in confinement will also eat gooseberries, and after all there is no reason why they should not eat hazel-nuts in a state of nature.

Recurring to a recent note on the low value placed on Irish shootings, it will be found on a more careful perusal of Messrs. Braddell's list that Irish sporting values are really ridiculously moderate. For 13,229 acres advertised the rental asked is only £8,189, or 3d. per acre! Taking a few of the Scotch grouse moors it was found that the rental worked out at something about 3s. 4d. per acre, and doubtless in favoured localities this price would be largely exceeded. Why there should be such a discrepancy it is hard to understand, as there is no reason that Irish moors and mountains could not be made worth more than one-thirteenth of the Scotch moors. In the days when Maxwell wrote "Wild Sports of the West," the grouse and rough shooting of Ireland would appear to have been far and away better than it is now. Tourist travel may do a good deal to develop Ireland in the way of showing its sporting capabilities, but it is the sportsman-tourist who must be enticed there if it is hoped to raise the status of Irish shootings. A few good syndicates got up on proper lines would do more good than anything else.

The Amateur Golf Championship.

WE have a new amateur golf champion, but it can hardly be said that the name is a new one in the annals of golf. Mr. Harold Hilton, this year's champion, has twice won the open championship, has three times previously been in the final for the amateur championship, but heretofore has never won it. Therefore there was rather a disposition to regard him as a score player of highest merit indeed, but, by comparison, an indifferent match player, the truth perhaps being that the wonderful steadiness of his score play did a little eclipse his merits as a match player, and made them less obvious than if he had played for score less well. But there can be no doubt about the way that he won this last amateur championship at Sandwich. He left no room for cavil. It must be something very like a record in the history of this tournament that he never played the sixteenth hole of the course, except in the final heat, which is a thirty-six hole affair, that is to say, that he won all his matches by four up and three to play or more—a wonderful record. One of his matches was against Mr. Robert Maxwell, the young Scottish player who has won such celebrity at North Berwick, and has distinguished himself in previous amateur championship tournaments. The match between him and Mr. Hilton was followed



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MR. J. A. T. BRAMSTON DRIVING.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

with a great deal of interest, because there was a general feeling that the victor of this contest would be the ultimate winner of the tournament. Unfortunately for Scotland's chance of winning the title, Mr. Maxwell was not quite in his best form when he met Mr. Hilton, by no means playing so well as on the Monday of the week when he won the St. George's Vase with scores of 77 and 78, equalling the late Mr. F. G. Tait's previous record score in this competition. On the other hand, Mr. Hilton played very perfect golf, giving little away, and once he got his head in front was not to be overtaken. He won this match by four and three to play. The final between him and Mr. Robb was not very interesting. Mr. Robb had fought his way pluckily into the final, after close matches with Mr. Arnold Blyth, Mr. J. E. Laidlay, and Mr. Bramston; but he was always a little weak in the driving as compared with these others, and had in each case saved the situation by the excellence of his putting. But this golf is a business that cannot be carried on for ever on these lines. He met rather a better man than any of these others when he came into the final with Mr. Hilton;



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CROSSING "SUEZ CANAL."

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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MR. J. ROBB.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

(Runner up for the Amateur Championship.)

also he had been playing high pressure matches all through the tournament, whereas Mr. Hilton had been winning with holes and holes to spare, so when he felt himself pinched he seemed to try to drive harder, with the common result that the ball went less and less to his satisfaction. Mr. Hilton was mechanical in his accuracy. He won a match that was no match by eight up and seven to play.

There can be scarce a doubt that the best man in the tournament list won, a result always to be admired. A reputation was made during the competition, namely, that of Mr. J. Bramston, the young Oxford freshman, a powerful driver, a player of all his clubs. It would have been interesting had the fortune of the draw brought him and Mr. Maxwell together to test the merits of the new schools in England and Scotland respectively; but that was not to be. Three ex-champions of amateurs were in the field, Mr. Balfour-Melville, whom Mr. Booth knocked out, Mr. Laidlay, who succumbed to Mr. Robb, and Mr. Horace Hutchinson, who fell before Mr. Laidlay in the second round.

Revolt of the Golfing Youth.

THERE has been some rather special interest attaching to the golf of the present spring that is at length attempting to transform itself into summer. There has been the melancholy interest attaching to the fact that the war in South Africa has made golfers and the army poorer by the loss of one of the finest players and one of the most gallant spirits that ever handled a golf club or a sword, the late Mr. F. G. Tait. For the time being our amateur golf at home has also been made the poorer by the absence of Mr. John Ball, present amateur champion, who has gone to the war as a yeoman. He, by the way, took the prize for the best conditioned horse when his troop disembarked, so he shows an inclination to gain other laurels than his golf medals—a yeoman of the very best and most capable type.

So with these two far away the honours in the amateur competitions seemed very open to other, lesser, younger men. That is our meaning in referring to the special interest of the golf of the present spring. It has been a season when we have watched the efforts of the younger school of golfers, spring-like, to come out on top of the older, to oust them from their pride of place and occupy it in their stead. On the whole, and considering how their champions were taken from them, the older school has withstood the assaults on their position beyond expectation. There have been notable lapses, but on the whole the wonder is that the older men have shown up so well in the competitions and great matches of the year, rather than that they should now

and again have suffered notable defeat. We say these things almost exclusively of the amateur class. The professional golf has been robbed of an immense deal of its interest for us by Harry Vardon's absence in America, where his play has fully kept up the reputation with which we sent him over. He suffered one defeat, it is true, on a course that is described as "mostly sand," but for the rest his tour has been a perpetual triumph, even, with scarce an exception, in those matches that the golfer, "regardless of grammar," like the good monks of Rheims, describes as played "against the best ball" of two others. Of the young professionals, Tom Williamson, the Notts man, is the one whose play has been watched with greatest attention and has shown most promise; but the chief interest has been in the doings of the amateurs.

The time has almost come when we are able to "make a little list" of the work done in the spring. The spring, be it said by-the-by, has now become the chief time of the golfer's activity, even as the autumn used to be, both amateur and open championships being over by the middle of June. It is a change mainly due to the fact that with the increasing number of golfers the space of an autumnal day was found altogether too short for all that had to be done in it when a golf championship was the business in hand.

We may say, perhaps, that the season of big events opened at Westward Ho! at Easter, with the competition for the Kashmir Cup. This is a two-round scoring competition, scratch, open to all amateur players. But what made this meeting an important one was that it coincided with the date at which teams of the Royal Liverpool Golf Club and of the Oxford and Cambridge Golfing Society were at Westward Ho! in order to play team matches against each other and against the local club. Well, this Kashmir Cup competition did not reveal any unsuspected talent. The wind was high, the greens were keen, and the scores were high likewise. The winner was Mr. Horace Hutchinson, at 175—this can hardly be considered *nouveau jeu*—with Mr. Hilton in close attendance at 176. But equal second with Mr. Hilton was one of the new school, of the local school of Westward Ho! Mr. Osmund Scott, taking a very good position in so good a field. An incident of the day was a very fine score for the first sixteen holes by Mr. H. C. Ellis, but then came *débacle*, with an eleven. So here was a victory for the old school. A deal of the following week was consumed in team matches, Royal Liverpool, Oxford and Cambridge Society and Royal North Devon engaging in a triangular duel, out of which the last-named, with the advantage of playing on its own course, came with flying colours. But of the individual matches the feature undoubtedly was the play of Mr. J. Bramston, so young a golfer that he is but a freshman at Oxford. Yet he caught Mr. Hutchinson, winner of the Kashmir Cup, badly off his game on Monday morning, followed up by



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MR. HAROLD HILTON.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

(Winner of the Amateur Championship.)

beating Mr. Hilton in the afternoon, and Mr. J. L. Low on the day after. Now these are very notable scalps for the decoration of a freshman's rooms at Oxford.

It may be said in passing that Mr. Bramston, as also Mr. H. C. Ellis, was a member of the Oxford team that gave the Cambridge side such an unmeasured beating at Sandwich; but that, though an interesting episode of golf of the spring, is not quite to the purpose of this review, which is concerned with contrasting the old and new schools.

Now, leaving this corner of the West Country and going on to the next event of note, the meeting of the Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers at Muirfield, we find yet another of the Oxford undergraduate team, Mr. Mansfield Hunter, winning the medal handsomely with a fine score of 79. Next to him was another golfer of the younger school, Mr. C. L. Dalziel, and behind these came the old stagers, Mr. J. E. Laidlay and Mr. Balfour Melville—a fine win for the younger school in a good field. From thence we go on, as next in point of time, to the meeting at North Berwick, when Mr. R. Maxwell, again one of the young school, and perhaps the most notable of all, won the Tantallon Cup in a gale of wind with a score of 85, that included two eights, and is proved to be of no small excellence by the fact that it was actually eleven strokes better than the second best returned in a field that included golfers of the calibre of Mr. Laidlay. Then at Hoylake, on the first spring medal day, Mr. J. Graham won the medal with a very fine return of 75, only one above the then record medal score for the green; but Mr. Hilton lowered this astonishingly on the second competition with a quite wonderful return of 72. So if the younger school had its turn on the first day, it was put back into its place on the second with a vengeance.

The St. Andrews spring meeting did not bring the two schools into very forcible comparison, for there were few representatives of the younger golf. The winner was Mr. J. L. Low, with a moderate score of 83, followed by Mr. Hutchings at a stroke more. The day was not altogether a bad one for golf, and one would be inclined to call Mr. Low a little lucky in winning

less than six strokes. Mr. Ellis, another of the younger school, was second to him, equal with Mr. Hilton and Mr. Hutchings, but the gap between them was a longish one. Again Scotland and the young school triumphed in the performance of Mr. Maxwell. "Youth will be served." The golfing yunkers were in full revolt.

In full revolt. But the older men were not prepared to lay



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MR. HILTON GETS OUT OF A BUNKER.

"COUNTRY LIFE"

down arms without a struggle. In the fight for the amateur championship that followed, it was commonly felt that the contest between Mr. Maxwell and Mr. Hilton was likely to determine the eventual holding of the title. Mr. Hilton was at his steadiest, Mr. Maxwell not quite at his most brilliant. The result, victory by four up and three to play for Mr. Hilton, who won the championship finally by beating Mr. Robb by eight up and seven to play. One can hardly call Mr. Robb one of the new school, and indeed the new school did not show up any too well in the tournament, except in the instance of Mr. Bramston, who was only beaten in the semi-final by Mr. Robb.

Mr. Hilton's win was a triumphant vindication of the wisdom and science of the older school. He beat no opponent by less than four and three to play, and at no time was he hard pressed.

The young school is in revolt, but the older school is not yet exhausted. It still has lessons that it can teach most practically.

Our Frontispiece.

LADY GLADYS MARY JULIETTE LOWTHER, who is the daughter of the fourth Earl of Lonsdale, whose widow, the sister of the thirteenth Earl of Pembroke, was married to Lord de Grey in 1885, was perhaps chief among the reigning beauties of her first season, which was last year. She was one of the bridesmaids at that wonderful wedding at which Lady Peggy Primrose became Lady Crewe.

Literary Notes.

IT is no fault of Miss Ellen Thorneycroft Fowler's that she has been recently classed with the great novelists of the nineteenth century; but the opprobrium of an indiscreet admirer's foolishness usually attaches also in some

degree to the object of admiration, and so, in the minds of those who care for literature, there must, however illogically, be a certain faint resentment against Miss Fowler herself because of her success. In writing her three facile and vivacious novels she was probably innocent of any suspicion that, being taken seriously, they would reach an aggregate circulation of 120,000 copies, and so place her where she at present is, in the very pupil of the public's eye. No matter! One may trespass innocently, but the penalty remains. When she hears the cold and inimical question: 'What are you doing up there, and how



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WATCHING THE FINAL.

"COUNTRY LIFE"

but for the fact that his luck in the amateur championship competitions has on two occasions been notoriously bad; so that he deserved this, at least, as a small help to set the balance even.

And therewith we come down to the history of the present day, to the Monday of the amateur championship, when Mr. R. Maxwell set the seal on his fame as a golfer by winning the St. George's Vase from a very strong and numerous field by no

did you get there?' Miss Fowler will have either to answer it by her books, or, soon or late, obey the harsh behest: 'Descend.' And that last will be the sufficient penalty."

These are the words of the *Academy*, or, rather, of some very superior person writing in the *Academy*. I, for one, hasten to say that the cap fits me, and that I put it on without any shame; and in doing so I remember that there are two well-known artifices by which the critic may put on the appearance of cleverness and of superiority. The first plan, which is played out somewhat, is to discern genius where the world at large finds simply tedium. The next is to decry that which the world at large admires hugely, and to explain that, according to the true and original principles of criticism, admiration is in this case or in that sheer folly. If I and others who have written on this book are fools—there is a nice frankness about the phrase—we have at least a sufficient company of companions in misfortune.

Now let us see what the superior person has to say. He speaks of "an aggregate circulation of 120,000 copies" for the three volumes at a moment when the third of them is but a few weeks old. Well, that is not so bad. He tells us that "the wonderful vogue of 'Concerning Isabel Carnaby' was disconcerting"—one would like to know to whom save the pedant—and that "the still more wonderful vogue of 'A Double Thread' was absolutely bewildering." It never bewildered me in the least, for I am stupid enough to think the book uncommonly clever, and obstinate enough to stick to my opinion. Then he tells us that "The Farringtons" is the best of the three, but that it marks but an inconsiderable advance, and deserves no better adjective than "bright." Well, the critic does not even deserve that adjective, as his treatment of the novel plainly shows. First, with painstaking baldness, he states the plot. Then he complains that the characters, except Elizabeth, are unreal and wanting in life, the answer to which must simply be flat contradiction. Next he talks of the author's "apparently complete ignorance of the craft of telling a story," and proceeds to analyse the number of pages devoted to various incidents in a single chapter. This is pharmaceutical criticism with a vengeance.

And what does it all come to? Simply this, that a clever woman who has not worried herself about the conventional rules of "craftsmanship," who does not care a straw about the unities or any of the rules of structure which have been handed down to us from the days of the poetics, has written a story which pleases men and women by the thousand, but which, somebody says, ought not to please. That is really the kind of book which one would rather write than any other, and the main difficulty is to find out why this good gentleman, or it may be lady, cannot appreciate it. It is because he has no sense of humour. He complains of Mrs. Rateson and Mrs. Hankey as persons, Methodist housewives, whose business it is to talk *apropos des bottes*. As a matter of fact, to those who know the Nonconformist business community of the Midlands, they come in naturally enough, and it is quite in harmony with the ways of that society that Chris and Elizabeth should have tea with them; but even if it were not, their sayings would be worth having and something more. So ends an unrepentant, if indiscreet, fool, who at least can see a joke and enjoy it.

There are changes in literary London which one regrets but yet tolerates, because they are necessary and in the public interest. Of such is the disappearance of Holywell Street, with its old bookshops, which will overflow, some of them, into new houses in more fashionable neighbourhoods, and some of them, no doubt, into adjoining slums, of which there is likely to be no lack for many a long year. It is a pity, but the daily constriction of traffic in the "roaring Strand" was a greater pity. But the case is far other when it is proposed, for neither rhyme nor reason, to change the name of an ancient alley in the City when that name has a historical association. "Duck's-foot Lane" is, according to the present proposal of the Corporation, to be called "Laurence

Pountney Hill." Probably the Corporation are unaware that "Duck's-foot Lane" is the lineal descendant of "Duke's-footway," the reference being to the many dukes who occupied the Rose, built by Sir Edward Pountney in the reign of Edward III. But they can hardly have failed to be aware that we have already a Laurence Pountney Lane. That there is much need for a systematic revision of London street names is not to be denied. There are heaven knows now many streets of identical names, especially Park Streets and Tavistock Streets—concerning the latter confusion I speak with feeling—but certainly the right method of revision is not to be found in the abolition of old and historic names, and in the substitution of new ones tending towards confusion.

Without doubt, it is matter for serious reflection that we find many of our best novelists bringing out their works for the first time through an American channel. The practice has been going on for some time, and Mrs. Humphrey Ward was one of the last to follow it. Now Mr. Anthony Hope is doing the same thing. His new "Dolly Dialogues" will be the main attraction, we may be sure, of a new American periodical to be entitled the *New Magazine*. It would be pleasanter, certainly, if pieces of this kind (which will be greatly sought after, for they represent Mr. Hope at his best) could make their bow first in an English journal. Beyond this, in these days of literary famine—for it almost amounts to that—the most interesting news is that Messrs. Methuen are preparing a sixpenny edition of Colonel Baden-Powell's personal narrative of the Matabele Campaign, with illustrations by the author. By the way, the special summer number of COUNTRY LIFE will contain some drawings of a very distinct and interesting character from the pen of the gallant and versatile Baden-Powell.

The "Supremacy of the Novel" has been treated by Mr. Andrew Lang, *apropos* of Lytton's Dedictory Epistle to "Paul Clifford," in the *Westminster Gazette*. It has, as the report of the first year's working of the Manchester Free Library (1852-53) quoted in the *Academy*, shows plainly, always been the trouble of the librarians. Folks will read to amuse themselves; they will not go out of their way to be instructed. But, so long as the popular taste remains as pure as it was in Manchester, there is no great cause for regret. "The Chimes," "Oliver Twist," "Kenilworth," "Peveril of the Peak," "The Fortunes of Nigel," "Vanity Fair," and "Pelham" were the favourites. "But of such works as these four or five times the number of copies which the library possesses would be in equally eager demand were they forthcoming." What matter? We do not want everybody to be working always; and all these books will do more good than harm. In fact, they will do no harm at all.

I hear with much sorrow that Mr. Eden Phillpotts, an occasional contributor to COUNTRY LIFE and the author of that delicious book the "Human Boy," has been compelled to take a long rest by reason of overwork. It is the old story of the literary profession, and for that matter of the Bar and of Medicine also. Looking back upon my contemporaries who have entered those professions—some have entered two of them—I see that without exception they have got too much work to do, or none, or have gone under altogether; and most of them, when they were full of freshness and vigour, had to kick their heels in sheer idleness.

Books to order from the library:—

- "Hilda Wade." Grant Allen. (Richards.)
- "From Door to Door." Bernard Capes. (Blackwood.)
- "Bruges: A Historical Sketch." W. C. Robinson. (De Plancke, Bruges.)
- "From Sandhill to Pine." Bret Hart. (Pearson.)
- "Nell Gwynne, Comedian." F. Frankfort Moore. (Reason.)
- "To the Healing of the Sea." Francis Hardy. (Smith, Elder.)
- "A Cynic's Conscience." G. Podmore. (Arnold.)

LOOKER-ON.

A NEW ZEALAND TROUT HATCHERY.

IT is rather a wonder that more idle fellows of the less base sort do not turn their idle thoughts towards the artificial hatching and rearing of trout. It is so easily done; it is such good fun; and, incidentally, it is doing a good work. There is one condition which is essential, but it is a condition not difficult to attain—you must have at command and at your own control a stream of water. It need be no more than a very little

one, but it is important that you should have complete control of it, because it may be necessary for you to alter its flow by dams or sluices, and it is essential that your arrangements of troughs and so on be not interfered with. Also it is much to be desired that your spring should give you water of a moderate and fairly equable temperature; but it is rather the exception than the rule when this is not the case. So all these are

conditions not hard to come by, conditions that are more likely to be present than absent on an estate of any size at all. The rest, such as providing gravel for the trout to spawn over (though this is not an essential), and providing the ponds or places into which you mean to turn out the trout, with aquatic weeds and insects suitable for their food (if these are not there already), is mere matter of very simple management.

The trout hatchery of which we are giving herewith some illustrations is on a scale very different from this. It is, indeed, on the greatest scale that exists in the southern hemisphere, for it is in the southern hemisphere, in New Zealand, at the town of Masterton, that this great hatchery, which is called the Masterton Trout Hatchery, is situated. The trout of New Zealand are well known by repute to every British angler, by happy experience known to only a comparative few. But we hear of them as big beyond the measure of our biggest trout, and game beyond our gamest, taking the artificial lure with a lovely primæval



W. Reid.

NETTING THE FISH.

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simplicity and appetite unspoiled by the luxurious civilisation of trout of an older country. And very largely all this excellence is due to the good work done at the Masterton Hatchery. Of the size of the hatchery some idea may be formed from the fact that it covers some thirteen and a-half acres. Of course, so great a business as this was not built, any more than Rome, in a single day, and it was more than a dozen years ago



W. Reid.

HATCHING BOXES.

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that the beginning of it was laid down under the auspices of the Wellington Acclimatisation Society. The whole is under the management of Mr. L. F. Ayson, and it is evidence, no less to the capabilities of the manager than to the liberal-minded and thorough manner in which the whole affair was undertaken, that before his appointment to this post he was sent out by the New Zealand Government to inspect all the principal hatcheries in America and in Europe. And here we may perhaps be allowed to pause for a moment to compare this action on the part of the New Zealand Government with the action of our Imperial authorities at home. What interest, on anything like the scale that this indicates, have they ever taken we do not merely say in our home trout fisheries, but in the infinitely more important matter of our salmon fisheries, that are in so poor a case? Far be it from us, of a country already overlaid with legislation, to say that every evil is to be met by Government measures for its remedy; but the question of our salmon supply is so important and so distinctly national that it does seem one that the Government might address itself to with good effect.

To return to the Masterton Fishery. It has, in much perfection, that first condition which we said to be essential—a supply, equal to all its wants, of good spring water of an even temperature. The hatching-house contains hatching boxes sufficient for the development of 2,500,000 fish every season. Outside the house are ponds and rearing places so constructed and so connected with the main stream that any one of them can be run dry at any time without affecting the water supply of the others. The original ova with which this great hatchery was started came from the Canterbury Acclimatisation Society of Tasmania, and even in that island the fish were not indigenous, but were imported from England. It is not so very many years ago that there was not such a fish as an English trout in all the rivers of the antipodes. The man who would venture a guess at their numbers to-day would be a bold one. The people at the Masterton Hatchery say that they have five kinds of trout there—the English brown trout, the Scottish brown trout, the Loch Leven, and the American rainbow and Fontinalis. This is a classification that presents a little trouble to the British

angler. We do not generally recognise any distinction between the English and the Scottish brown trout; but these New Zealanders—is it possible that the fish develop greater difference in the changed climate?—seem to see distinctions warranting their division into separate species. This is a hard matter. In any case the success of the importation can only be described as immense. The fish seem to have found food galore in those rivers in which they were the pioneers of their kind. They have grown to vast size and multiplied exceedingly. The only question that one feels inclined to ask is whether they are likely to keep up to this good standard when they have once eaten up the first virgin supply of their food in these new rivers whether the food supply can continue equal to their demand. But this again is a hard matter, and we can only wonder and hazard guesses.

At the Masterton Hatchery they are by way of further multiplying or confounding the species of the fish by crossing the brown trout with the rainbow, and the results have been very encouraging. If we could infuse a little of the bold biting of the rainbow into the shy feeding fish of our Test, our Itchen, and the rest of the chalk streams, how much less of the contemplative man's pursuit would be absorbed by the pleasures of hope and contemplation. The infant mortality among the trout at this Masterton place is brought down to what must surely be almost an irreducible minimum, only 5 per cent. on an average being lost, whereas this is considered a good percentage to grow to maturity in the rivers. In the hatchery they are, of course, secure from the action of flood, of birds and beasts of prey, and of their own cannibal kind, and in fact from nearly all the ills that infant trout flesh is heir to.

To follow, briefly, the stages of trout life at the hatchery, and the manner of its management: In the spawning season the trout are taken out with a net, either from the hatchery ponds or from the river, and artificially spawned, an operation that can be done without injury to the fish, even if it entail their being kept for ten minutes or so from the water. In a good year only one river is thus netted, in a bad year two or three; but seeing that in any case 80 per cent. of the young trout are returned to the rivers again there is certainly no depopulation



W. Reid.

TINS USED FOR TRANSPORTING THE FISH.

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as a consequence of these methods. It is easy enough in the spawning season to distinguish the male fish from the female; for at that time the male takes on a strong orange tinge about his under parts. At other seasons it takes an experienced eye to distinguish the sexes.

The fertilised ova are placed in shallow wooden trays with a wire gauze bottom, and these are then set in troughs, through

which a constant stream of water is kept running. The American trout remain in the egg state for three weeks only, the English and Scottish (if they are to be distinguished) for five. Every day the eggs are carefully inspected and the bad ones taken out—a most necessary precaution, for a bad egg will soon affect those in contact with it. After the young fish are hatched they are transferred to other troughs, with gravel at the bottom, and are fed on liver, minced very fine, and milk curdled with rennet. In six weeks they are able to "do for themselves," although it is not for three years that they can be said to come to maturity. Sometimes in the Masterton Hatchery they attain the weight of 14lb.—a prospect to gladden the angler's heart. It is hardly necessary to say that the different sized fish are kept apart, otherwise the big ones would inevitably eat up all their little brothers. The older trout are fed every morning, and follow the man who feeds them along the edge of the water until the food, chiefly consisting of sheep's pluck, is thrown into them, and



W. Reid.

SPAWNING RACE.

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then there begins the most terrific uproar, boiling and fighting in the water as the fish rush for their dinners.

The pictures show different episodes of the hatchery and rearing business. There is, in the first place, the man NETTING THE FISH OUT, in the spawning time, to get the spawn. Secondly and thirdly, there are various aspects of the hatchery house, showing the HATCHING BOXES with the water passing through them.

In the third picture some round cans may be seen on the upper shelves. It is in these that the fish travel when it is wished to send them to other places in New Zealand itself. They travel best in this manner when about an inch in length. When sent further into the world—over-sea—they travel in the egg state, packed in wooden boxes, between layers of muslin, with moss above and below, and ice on the top of all. The ice melts, and running through the layers of moss and muslin keeps all moist until the eggs arrive at their destination. In this way large numbers have been sent to New South Wales, Queensland, Perth, W.A., and New Caledonia.

The fourth picture shows the SPAWNING RACE, and in the fifth the man with the pail is bringing the fish their dinner, and the vexed surface of the water indicates the eager RUSH OF THE FISH FOR FOOD, the moment it is thrown to them.

Finally, there is a picture of two SPECIMEN FISH, taken while still alive, and about to be restored to the water as soon as their portraits are completed. They are rather good as specimens, for, putting aside the little one, they weigh about 4lb. each, but whereas the nearer is a long lean pike-headed fellow, the other is as beautiful and symmetrical a fish as ever came out of any water in the world. If we may accept him as a type of the product of the Masterton Trout Hatchery, then that great institution is indeed, like wisdom, justified of all her children.



W. Reid.

RUSH OF THE FISH FOR FOOD.

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SPECIMEN FISH.

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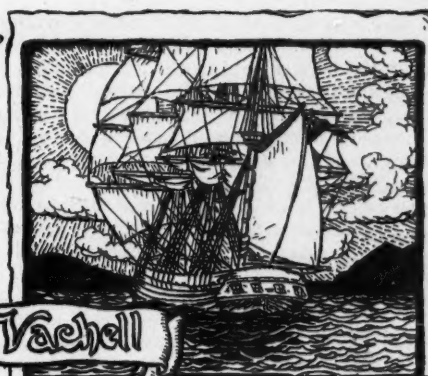
John Charity

A Romance of Yesterday

Containing certain adventures and love passages in Alta California of John Charity, yeoman of Cranberry Dreas in the County of Hampshire, England as set down by himself.

Edited by

Horace Amesley Vachell



Rockham. Est. 1899.

CHAPTER XX.

WITHOUT DRAWING REIN.

I HAVE often thanked my Maker that I am a man, because to the male is given the blessed privilege of action. Who would not sooner work than weep? And work that draws the sweat from the skin and racks strained muscles and sinews is surely a better anodyne than all the drowsy syrups of the pharmacopœia.

That ride in the early morning, with the wet boughs of the chaparral scourging our faces, lasted but one hour. The Yaqui led the way, and spared neither quirt nor spur. In after years I rode over the same ground with an English friend at my side, a man, too, known in the shires as a bold horseman, no mean judge of what a horse and rider can do at a pinch. Yet he shook his head and smiled as we picked our way up a rocky, gulch-seamed slope, down which I told him we had raced at a gallop.

As we rode into the town, Courtenay pointed out to me a ship at anchor, not far from the moorings of the Heron.

"By Jove!" he exclaimed, "Castillero has come at last."

I wondered whether he had come too late, but the question was answered in a couple of minutes. The town was *en fête* even at that early hour, and on every lip was the name of my brave and patient chief. Leaving Courtenay at Larkin's, I rode straight to the Governor's house, which I found crowded with friends—truly their name was legion on that day—and amongst them were the *comisionado* and all the chief men of the north. I soon learned that Alvarado had been formally confirmed as Governor, Vallejo as Commander-in-Chief; while to Carlos Carrillo was given a large island, whither, it was hoped, he would betake himself. I had never seen his Excellency in finer health or spirits.

"Well, my friend," he said, as soon as we were alone, "I have power now, and shall use it."

"Has any attempt been made upon your Excellency's life?"

"Why do you ask?" he retorted, quickly.

"I had reason to believe that mischief was brewing."

"The yeast was not strong enough, my friend. Yes, between ourselves death has been near me since you left Monterey. And," his voice softened, "I have reason to believe that I owe my life and what it holds to a woman. I was sitting at my desk reading upon the evening of the day you went to Carmelo when this was brought to me."

He took from his pocket a half sheet of paper. On it were inscribed a few words, obviously written with the left hand: a friend entreated his Excellency to go to bed at ten instead of at midnight—the usual time.

I looked at my chief enquiringly.

"You know my habits, Juan. I can only study when the town is quiet, and I am apt to be engrossed in my work. A man could steal through that window yonder and stab me easily, could he not?"

"He could," I assented. "My God! Why did we not think of that before?"

"Or from the top of the wall he could shoot me. 'Twould be a fair shot, even for a poor marksman."

"Your Excellency, I cannot forgive myself for being so careless of your safety."

"It seems," he said, gravely, "that God will not permit me to die a dog's death. Well, my friend, that paper was confirmation, 'strong as Holy Writ,' to me of what we had both suspected. Yet I wished to put my doubts to the test. And I hoped to arrest the assassin with my own hand."

"Your Excellency," I said, gloomily, "you are not to be trusted alone. You ran a dreadful risk."

"Wait. Only a fool, Juan, runs a risk that may be avoided. Yet some chances a man, if he be a man, must take—matrimony for instance," and he smiled slyly. "Accordingly, I prepared a dummy that I set in my chair, back to the window; then I armed myself and waited, but I bade the orderly to stand without the door. My fear was that the assassin, if he chanced to be hid in

the garden, would see me at my work. And, unhappily, this is exactly what must have happened, for no shot was fired, no man crawled through the open window; and yet, when I searched the garden upon the following morning, I found this."

He laid before me a small tobacco pouch, such as the Indians of Sonora make and sell. They are costly trifles, and never used by the Indians themselves.

"If I could find the owner of this," said my chief, softly, "I would send for Quijas. The wretch should not die unshriven."

"That belongs," said I, "to de Castañeda. I can swear that it is his, and there is not another like it in Monterey!"

"I made certain it was he, but I lacked proof. And, Juan, I dared not show this pouch to my—my friends, for fear that one of them would warn the scoundrel. Make you aught of that piece of paper?"

I turned it over and over, examining with care the texture of it, the ink, the writing. Then I shook my head.

"Smell it," said my chief.

"*Madre de Dios!*" I exclaimed. Then I paused, crimson with confusion. About that scrap of paper hung a scent familiar to me, the faint odour of an essence used by Magdalena.

"Who wrote that letter?" said his Excellency, in a cold voice.

I hesitated. I could not bring myself to name the daughter of Estrada. Alvarado slapped my shoulder.

"My poor Juan," said he. "Your Magdalena has saved her father's life as well as mine. And do you think I shall prove ungrateful? Well, what remains to be told? The arrival of Castillero has given me a new lease of life. Coyotes will bait a solitary bull; they keep their distance from the herd. Do you know that the *comisionado's* vessel, La California, had not rounded the Punto de los Pinos an hour before that old fox Estrada came to me, entreating my pardon? He gave me the history of the past six months, and swore that my life had never been in danger. I laughed in his yellow face, and even he had the grace to blush. For your sake, Juan, and for the sake of Magdalena, I shall spare him. But Soto and de Castañeda shall hang high as Haman. A soldier's death is too honest for them."

Then I told him exactly what had passed in the foothills of Carmelo. Before I had finished the story he sent an orderly for Castro, and as soon as that large gentleman entered the room commanded the immediate arrest of the Mexicans.

Castro shrugged his broad shoulders. "The birds are flown," he said, with an oath. "They left Monterey the day before yesterday with two caponeras."

"Curse it!" exclaimed my chiefly, savagely. "Why was I not told of this?"

"We have been busy," muttered the big fellow.

"We?" The emphasis was ironic. "Well, send some soldiers after them at once."

"The men cannot leave before to-morrow," said Castro, sullenly.

"It is always to-morrow," said Alvarado, savagely. "Well, see to it that no blunders are made."

When Castro had gone, he said: "Narciso will give you Magdalena, and I fancy the maid is willing enough, for she has made friends again with your cousin. And yet," he sighed, "I could wish, Juan, that you had chosen another. Ay, you say she is a Bandini, but she is also Estrada."

"I love her with all my soul," said I, fervently.

He went to his desk, unlocked a drawer and took from it a roll of parchment.

"Here is your title," said he, "to the lands once owned by the Marquis of Branciforte. The papers have been prepared for a long time; they were signed yesterday." And as he spoke I made certain—poor fool—that our worries and perplexities were at an end. The barque that bore Cæsar and his fortunes had crossed the troubled waters. And so far as Cæsar was concerned I was right. From that hour Juan Bautista Alvarado became the autocrat of Alta California. What happened to him after-

wards has become a chapter in the world's history, a chapter not without interest to the Anglo-Saxon race. But let this be said of him—in the hour of triumph he forgot not his friends.

I took the papers he gave to me, and stammered my thanks.

Then, for the first time—for he was the most undemonstrative of men—he took me in his arms and kissed me solemnly on both cheeks. It was a joyful minute for both of us.

Soon after I left him and went at once to Larkin's, where I expected to find Letty. My foster-brother came forward to meet me, a frown upon his face, and in his hand a letter. He told me that Letty and Magdalena were not in town. Tia Maria Luisa had a kinsman who owned a beautiful rancho on the banks of the Salinas, and to this the girls had gone to attend a big rodeo.

"Old Narciso took them," said Courtenay, absently. "Yes, it really looks, Jack, as if we had come into smooth water at last."

I was not aware that Master Courtenay had been in rough water, but I said nothing, for I saw from his face that he was deeply affected. Then he handed me the letter, which was in my mother's writing. I read a dozen lines. Austin Valence was dead.

I took his hand and pressed it.

"My dear Courtenay, what can I say to you?"

"Nothing," he replied, gravely. "He was my enemy and my brother. Ah! John, old friend, death tears the veil from our eyes—doesn't it. The evil that was in him, poor fellow, is in me also. Finish the letter."

"Sir Marmaduke" (wrote my mother) "is sorely afflicted. Yet I cannot doubt that his hard heart is softened. Come home, Courtenay, you are wanted here, and England is surely the best place for you and the little lass. . . ."

There was much more in the same strain.

"My mother is right, Courtenay; you had better return as you came, in the Heron."

He protested that he would not leave me, but I could see that in fancy his mind was 7,000 miles away.

A clod is in its element out of doors, but the same piece of clay transmuted into porcelain is seen to better advantage in a drawing-room. I was naturally simple, he complex, versatile, volatile, but always charming. I have since come to the conclusion that fascinating persons are innately selfish. Because they please themselves, because they cultivate assiduously the *joie de vivre*, they please others. But I did not find this out for many years.

As I was thinking sadly of the sweet vale of Itchen and my mother's dear face, Quijas entered, wearing a very sour look. It must distress the sons of Holy Church to find themselves burdened with secrets which untold may work mischief to their friends. Quijas had seen Procopio, and doubtless had learned from him details withheld from heretic ears. Perhaps, too, the Indita, Eustachia Bonilla, knew more than she confided to her lover.

"You look cross, padre Quijas," said I. "But Courtenay has just told me that we are in smooth water. His Excellency triumphs, his enemies have vanished."

"Vanished!" said Quijas, somewhat contemptuously. "If I were you, señores, knowing as you do what manner of men these Mexicans are, I would make sure of that. Alta California is too small a country to hold them and you."

I was silent, sensible that de Castañeda and Soto driven to the wall were about as dangerous and treacherous as tigers. Courtenay rose at once with an air of determination.

"We can talk just as well in the saddle," he said, significantly. "Come, Jack, I shan't be happy till Letty's hand lies in mine."

"I'll go with you," said Quijas bluntly. Then he asked if we were well armed. I noted that he borrowed a pistol and a puñal, weapons banned and barred to a friar. "*Virgen Santisima*," he growled to me, "I carry these, my son, to the glory of God and the undoing of His enemies."

"What! You look for a fight?"

"Though the sun shine, leave not thy cloak at home. Perhaps we borrow trouble, but *quien sabe?* The rattlesnake strikes when the colt is grazing."

His words made us very uneasy. Courtenay took me aside while our horses were being saddled, and said, despondently, "That devil sent his Indians to kill us, so that he might deal as he pleased with Letty. The sweet soul may be now in his clutches. What a blind fool I have been."

My fears marched with his, a choir invisible.

"Is Magdalena to be trusted?" he asked abruptly.

Now this question I had not dared to answer.

"There may be some plot," continued my foster-brother.

"A jealous woman sticks at nothing. Why should she kiss the cheek she has slapped? Curse it! Not half-an-hour ago I told you that we were in smooth water. And now—"

I consoled him—and muzzled my own misgivings—with a few obvious arguments. Magdalena—I pointed out—being a

Latin would doubtless prefer to make her peace with me indirectly, and having wronged Letty in thought would make extravagant amends in deed. The old don, too, might now be counted as a friend. He, at least, dared compromise himself no more. And so on and so forth.

At nine we again took the road, and galloped without drawing rein till we came to the broad ford of the Salinas, flashing and sparkling in the sunlight. 'Twas piping hot, and our horses were spent. California, be it remembered, is a twin. The California of matins and vespers is fresh and dewy, perfumed, melodious, a chromatic scale of colours, sounds, and odours; but the California of high noon is sun-scorched and dusty, bare and bleak, scentless, a monotone.

"*Carajo!*" exclaimed the Yaqui, as we stopped at the ford to water our cattle and tighten the slackened girths, "a draught of Padre Duran's aguardiente would be sweeter than a kiss from Eustachia."

While he was speaking the keen eyes of Quijas had marked a milky stain upon the horizon. This soon became a pillar of dust, and as we rode to meet it the forms of a man and mule were made manifest.

"'Tis your friend the Jew," said the priest.

From Solomon we gleaned rank weeds—doubt, disappointment, stinging fears. He had attended the Castro rodeo and reported the presence there of Castañeda and Soto. This audacity on their part whetted fresh apprehensions. At the same time we were enchanted to learn that Letty was safe and sound in old Narciso's charge.

"You left them at the ranch-house?" said Courtenay.

Solomon replied that Soto and de Castañeda had left the ranch at dawn with their caponeras and Indians, and that two hours after Narciso and his party had set out for the capitol.

"But there is only one road. Why have we not met them?"

Solomon shrugged his fat shoulders.

"Why have we not met them?" repeated Courtenay.

Procopio explained that possibly Don Narciso had stopped for rest and refreshment at a small place that belonged to him, known as La Laguna Seca, situate about a mile from the high road. This seemed so probable that we plucked up our spirits. It was insufferably hot, no Spaniard, with ladies in his company, would brave the rigours of a midday journey.

"What road did the Mexicans take?" asked Quijas.

That question the Jew could not answer. Accordingly we bade him God-speed, and rode on again rather lighter of heart. Quijas, galloping at my side, spoke of Magdalena, and his cunning tongue conjured up a score of scenes. I could see the little maid at her devotions—the *alabado*, chanted always at dawn, echoed in my ears. I could see her at play, at hoodman-blind, ducks and drakes, hide and seek, the same games dear to English children. I could see her, a pathetic figure, *en penitencia*, kneeling in a corner of the big *comedor*, before a hide-covered stool, on which was laid in mockery a cup, a platter, and a spoon (suggesting a Barmecide's feast), while at the long table her stern-faced father and his guests gorged heavily. I could see her, a maiden of thirteen, overlooking with kindly eyes the labours of the Inditas, standing in the laundry beside the snow-white, sweet-scented piles of linen, whose finest pieces had been hemmed and embroidered by her own fingers, or in the kitchen upon the eve of a fiesta, or last of all, when the day's work was done, seated on the long cool verandal, her fingers caressing the strings of her guitar, while from her lips, out into the starry silence, floated the mournful love-lilts of Spain and Mexico.

This fluent talk beguiled the time, and ere long we topped a ridge below which lay the dried-up lake that gave the grant its name. The ranch-house, a small adobe, stood upon the farther shore, with a stone corral hard by, but of human life there was not a sign, not even a reek of smoke.

"The place is deserted," exclaimed Courtenay.

We skirted a lake fringed with a rank growth of *tule* and rushes, and drew rein at the closed door of the adobe. In and around the corral were the fresh hoof-marks of many horses. Castañeda and his caponeras had evidently come and gone.

"We waste our time," said Courtenay, impatiently. "I doubt whether the ladies have been here at all."

Procopio suddenly spurred his horse to a canter, swung from the saddle, and picked up a white object.

"They have been here," said I, as Procopio tendered me a piece of linen. "This is Letty's handkerchief."

We looked at each other, while Quijas, with a nod to the Yaqui to follow him, rode around the buildings and corral. When he rejoined us his large face was black with misgiving.

"There is the road to Monterey," he pointed due west. "Castañeda and those with him are riding north."

"Then our course is north," said my foster-brother. "Curse it!" he broke out, "what does this mean?"

Quijas answered: "What I feared has come to pass. The ladies have been abducted."

"And we stand prating about it. Mount, man, mount."

Quijas held up his hand. Authority sat enthroned on his massive brows. Never had I liked the man so much as now.

"*La noche es capa de pecadores*" (night is a cloak for sinners), quoted the friar softly. "Twill be night, señor Valence, in one hour, our horses are not fresh; we are four against a possible ten; we must make haste, my friend, slowly. Am I right?" He turned to me.

I did not answer.

"We must procure horses and men, an Indian trailer——"

"You can leave that to me," said Procopio, in his peculiar, guttural tones. "*Huh!* what was that?"

He and Quijas had dismounted, and had uncinched their horses. Now the Yaqui ran quickly to the adobe, tore the heavy shutter from one of the windows, and, peering within, uttered a loud cry. The rest of us were at his heels in an instant.

"*Dios!*" exclaimed Quijas, "it is Don Narciso bound and gagged."

We entered the hut and released the old man, who glared savagely at us whilst we cut the raw hide thongs. The gag had paralysed his jaw. Quijas poured some brandy down his throat, and presently the words came in jerks, as if the speaker's tongue had the spring-halt.

"What does he say?" asked Courtenay.

"Nothing but curses so far," replied the friar.

The old fellow, still stammering incoherently, pointed a trembling finger at Courtenay. Rage rather than weakness impeded speech. Finally we interpreted his story. Soto and de Castañeda had carried off Lettice and Magdalena. Then the Don fell to cursing again.

"Don Narciso," said Quijas, in his deepest bass, "the saints will not suffer this outrage. *Vaya*, we must be moving. Every minute is of consequence."

"You are going to Monterey—no?"

"Assuredly."

"I ride north," said Courtenay, and his lips were set in a curve I knew well. Sir Marmaduke used to say that his wife had been the most obstinate woman in Great Britain.

"That is madness, señor Valence."

"Perhaps. Good-bye, Jack."

"I follow you," said I.

"*Caramba!* You cannot trail them, you——"

"I go with the caballeros," observed Procopio, vaulting into the saddle. "And, father, I have five of my blessed bullets yet."

The friar shrugged his vast shoulders. "So be it," he murmured. "One fool makes many. Don Narciso, you must share my horse."

The old man stood up, very stiff and pompous.

"Must," said he, "is a word that has no meaning to an Estrada. I shall accompany these gentlemen. I have no horse, you say? *Bueno!* I will take the Yaqui's. He can run. His nose will be nearer the ground."

Finally, it was agreed that Quijas should carry our ill news to his Excellency. He promised to return with the soldiers detailed to arrest the Mexicans.

Then, without setting foot in the stirrup, he sprang to the saddle and spurred his sorrel into a gallop. Don Narciso mounted Procopio's horse. The Yaqui ran swiftly forward. We followed.

Now, despite my own anxiety and dismay, I could not help marking the peculiar expression upon Courtenay's face. Suddenly he turned to the Don and said, savagely, "This may be no rape."

"What!" I exclaimed, "you think Letty is a party to this outrage? You are mad."

"You insult my daughter," said old Narciso, with much dignity.

"God forgive me," my foster-brother muttered to me. "I am, indeed, mad, John; and I have been mad for months, neglecting the sweetest wife man ever had."

Then he fell into such a black melancholy that I did my best to comfort him.

"I have a feeling," he said, shudderingly, "that I shall never look into Letty's blue eyes again."

(To be continued.)

A Round with the Estate Manager.

IT is a pity that land owning is so little of a profession. The country would be in a healthier state were estate owners to leave their affairs a little less to deputies. At any rate, they might be more in touch with the actual management of the business of the estate than the generality of them are. Of course all cannot. Some, fortunately for the nation, are so much engrossed with the affairs of State that they have no time for attending to matters at home. They look to their estates as a place of relaxation rather than as a field for employment; and others own such large estates that even if otherwise free to devote attention to their management the field is too wide. But many remain who, had they some knowledge of the first principles of estate management, would find pleasure as well as profit in taking a leading part in the routine work of their possessions.

The work of the estate manager is fairly comprehensive. It trenches on that of the engineer and surveyor, and takes cognizance of the spheres of the several mechanics who have to do with buildings generally, and it is identified with the operations of the forester, fencer, roadman, and drainer; and, over and above all, it implies a full acquaintance with more than one branch of agricultural practice. It means, therefore, that the estate manager must be a fairly all-round man so far as a knowledge of outdoor matters is concerned. All matters of the kind are full of interest to intelligent men, and they are sufficiently numerous and the different departments comprehensive enough to afford exercise to a hobby without encroaching on the scope of others that happen to be less engrossing to the riders thereof.

We do not wish to imply that rural matters would be revolutionised were land-owners to take upon themselves the duties of estate management; but there can be no question that both they and those that the land supports would in many ways be gainers could this be brought about to a greater degree. True, there are not a few incidental transactions which it would hardly be dignified on the part of the proprietor to undertake personally. He might at least be spared the banterings of bargain making; he could, however, easily evade all that sort of thing, and yet keep himself in close relation with what transpired on the estate. Business of that nature could be left to his steward or agent. There is ample room on the landed



DISCUSSING BUSINESS WITH A TENANT.

estate for both proprietor and agent without fear of the overlapping of affairs. We should not like to say that a change of the kind we are referring to would put an end to the present outcry over the depopulation of country districts. Still it might help. If it served to give more interest in life to those whose lot is cast there it would be working to that end, and no one who knows anything about rural affairs can deny that it would.

Just now, however, we are more immediately concerned with the outdoor work of the agent, some phases of which we endeavour to depict in the accompanying photographs, taken one day by a pupil of artistic tastes who brought his camera on the round. In the first of the series a call is being made at a farmhouse on the estate, and some business of a passing nature discussed with the tenant. In the second, some notes are being taken in connection with A STAFF OF DRAINERS. These, it is almost needless to say, are Irishmen; at least they are of Irish descent. They never saw the distressful island; but notwithstanding they have still a dash of the brogue which their fathers brought over with them. It is rather remarkable



A STAFF OF IRISH DRAINERS.

that the drainers of rough pasture or moorland are mostly Scotsmen, while invariably we find those of the lowlands to be Irishmen. The circumstances of the two situations differ, however. In the former instance the drains are shallow and remain open, and the men work alone or in pairs, and are able to deal with a wide extent of country. In the latter, on the other hand, the men work in groups, and get over less ground. This, in connection with the fact that the Scot is not averse to solitude either in work or in habitation, while his *confrère* prefers to work in company and to dwell in a town, has, we suspect, much to do with the matter. We may meet with an Irishman as drainer on a moor farm, but rarely with a Scotsman doing tile draining in arable land, unless indeed he be there as general superintendent or foreman over the squad. The same holds good, we believe, on the English estate. There, as on the Scottish one, the actual drainer of arable land is either a direct importation from over the Channel, or a second or third remove therefrom. In fact, he is more likely to be in either of the latter two categories than in the first one, seeing there is now so little chance of the unsophisticated original gaining a foothold among his naturalised brethren.

Our business finished there, we proceed on our way, but have not gone far ere the artist begs for the chance of a snap at A PLOUGHMAN AND HIS TEAM stepping cheerily along in the act of forming drills in connection with early potato planting, which we gladly grant him.

And a little further on the GROUP OF BLACK-FACED HOGGETS was declared by all of us as being worthy of another pull-up. These hardy little fellows are sent down from the hills to spend their first winter on the arable farms. So much a-head



A GROUP OF BLACK-FACED HOGGETS.

is paid for each that survives the winter, and is counted over to the shepherd who calls for them in the spring. They have the free run of the farm, and pick up a living the best way they can. In no way are they specially provided for, unless during a snow-storm, when a little hay may be scattered about for them. Were they more tenderly dealt with in their youth they would it is understood be less able to withstand the vicissitudes that are in store for them on the bleak hillsides when they come to act the part of ewes.

Our next place of call is where some masons and carpenters are doing odd repairs, and also erecting a shed for general purposes.

It is only, of course, the very elementary departments of the building art that the estate manager has to do with. When work connected with the higher branches springs up, the services of the professional have to be called in.

The same applies to engineering, but it is very seldom that outside skill is necessary in this connection. Estate engineering, however, is usually on such simple lines that the well-trained manager can be left to deal with it



A PLOUGHMAN AND HIS TEAM.

himself, and any surveying that has to be done he can easily take in hand.

We then take a look in at some of THE WOODMEN who are filling up some bare pieces of plantation. Here, again, the artist makes use of his opportunities, and secures a view of two men in the act of moving felled timber to the nearest roadside.

Forestry is one of the most fascinating departments of estate management. Rarely, however, does the chance offer of its being gone into in a systematic manner. Timber growing, to be made successful, must be done, like agriculture, according to methods, and only on the larger estates is there room for this. Elsewhere our trees are devoted to the purposes of ornament and of game preserving. Something could be made out of them, even under these conditions, were the interests of the forester and the gamekeeper not suffered so often to become antagonistic.

One more opportunity to the artist while we inspect some repairs that have been executed to the breastwork of the dam in which is stored the motive-power of the estate saw-mill and we are homeward bound.

Such, by way of illustration, is the interesting nature of the work that usually devolves upon the estate manager. But every day is not, of

course, so pleasant as the one in question. There is much bad weather to be faced throughout the year, and at times there are unpleasant jobs to be taken part in. On the whole, however, the duties of the estate manager are generally of a description that falls in with the habits of the land-owner. We do not mean to imply that work of the kind can be taken in hand right off. But a knowledge of first principles grafted on a mind at home in rural affairs, and kept pruned by common-sense, very soon bears profitable fruit.

We believe that ere long many more of our land-owners will qualify themselves in that branch of their many duties. It is hardly to be wondered that so few have taken that trouble. It is only within recent years that their deputies have gone systematically into acquiring some proper training by way of qualifying for the very important work they intend taking up.

Formerly a great part of the business of a large estate was transacted by an agent frequently residing at a distance and often quite ignorant of agricultural and other essential matters. He had to depend on a subordinate for his information, and as the latter was only interested in showing the greatest possible return and the least possible expenditure, both the property and those living on it naturally suffered. Fortunately this state of affairs is now almost a thing of the past, and with the increasing interest taken in country life we may hope for still better things.

Badger-hunting in Bavaria.

BY BARONESS AUGUSTA VON SCHNEIDER.

BADGER-HUNTING has ceased for years to exist as a sport in England, yet in the wilds of Bavaria it still retains all the attractions which endeared it to our forefathers. I can see before me the scene in the little village in the Fichtel Gebirge, when the huntsman had reported the discovery of a dacksbau, or badger's burrow. The news was taken straight to the freiherr, who, seated in his study, was immersed in books on forestry. It took but an instant to array himself in the joppe, a fustian coat worn alike by prince and peasant in those parts, and, armed with a long and pointed double-edged sheathed knife, to join the little group assembled round the village fountain.

A picturesque group enough, it consisted of his sons, two stalwart boys of fifteen and sixteen, clad in the joppe, short leather breeches that left the knees bare, and pointed green felt hats ornamented with a hawk's feather; the huntsman, or oberförster, a grim, swarthy personage, deep chested, of tremendous breadth of shoulder, a splendid type of the amalgamated elements



THE WOODMEN.

of the Slav and Bavarian races, a mixture seen to perfection among the peasantry of Upper Franconia; and the jägerburschen, five in number, all lancers from the neighbouring cavalry garrison, clean-limbed lads, their agile frames steeled to endurance in the alternations of military discipline and life in their native woods. Straining in the leash, six dachshunds made up the group, their satin coats, high chest-bones, strongly-developed muscles, long hanging ears, and straight tails showing them to be of the purest blood, the famous strain bred by old Voit, the huntsman, who prided himself greatly on the thick-set little animals, as well he might, for none such were to be found in all the breadth of Bavaria.

Sepperl carried the palm, the veteran of many a fight, the scars of which he bore on his muzzle and broad chest; a few—very few—white hairs were mingled with the glossy black of his coat, but his eye was as bright, his scent as keen as ever; his puckered face seemed to express a sense of responsibility as he let himself down on his little square haunches. There was business in 'Rette's mien; business also in Mui's, Treff's, Schlupf's, and Greif's; but while the younger dogs yelped and barked incessantly, Sepperl, though quivering with excitement in every fibre, uttered only an occasional little suppressed half sigh, half groan, while he raised his head to scan Voit's countenance.

That functionary, on an interrogation of "San mersch?" from his master, blew a whistle, and the troop set off. Through the straggling village of low white houses, across an open bit of moor, through a plantation of young firs, their slender top-shoots in the full morning sun standing out sharply against the soft blue of the mountains; off the track into the dark forest. Softly treading the elastic turf thickly covered with fir needles, they walked in silence, broken only by an occasional light crack when the heel of one of them pressed on a fallen branch, or by the straining crunch of leather. Half an hour's walk, mostly ascending, brought them to where a large rock stood, covered with moss in places and with tiny firs growing out of its clefts. The dogs broke out again into yelps when they neared the spot, for at the base of the rock was the badger's burrow, and Sepperl, who had been with Voit at the finding, was making it known to his companions. Two apertures led to the burrow. The men placed themselves before these, and Sepperl and Treff, being released from their collars, penetrated the earthy windings. As is well known, the habits of the badger are nocturnal; it sleeps in the daytime in its burrow; thus the attack by day gives

its enemies the advantage of a surprise. Though quiet and inoffensive when let alone, it is a formidable antagonist when driven to bay, and shows great fighting power and resistance. The stifled cries of the dogs while they worked their way beneath announced that they had "found." Soon Treff, in a pitiable condition, came in sight, blocking one of the holes, his ears bitten in the encounter, and a quantity of hair torn from his neck. They pulled him out and sent 'Rette in, and again a fierce encounter was begun. The badger, with the tenacity of its kind, with whom dislocation of the jaw, on account of its peculiar construction, is all but impossible, had fastened his teeth in one of Sepperl's front paws, and maintained his hold in spite of 'Rette's furious onslaught. Then the other dogs were loosed, and soon after, under their combined attacks, the badger began to show signs of failing; covered with wounds, his tormentors, too, were in a sorry plight. Inch by inch, some pushing, some dragging the now dying animal, they laboured with fierce growls, regardless, in the excitement of the struggle, of their injuries. Voit, upon his knees before the burrow, gave the death-stroke when they reached the opening.



THE STREAM THAT DRIVES THE SAW-MILL.

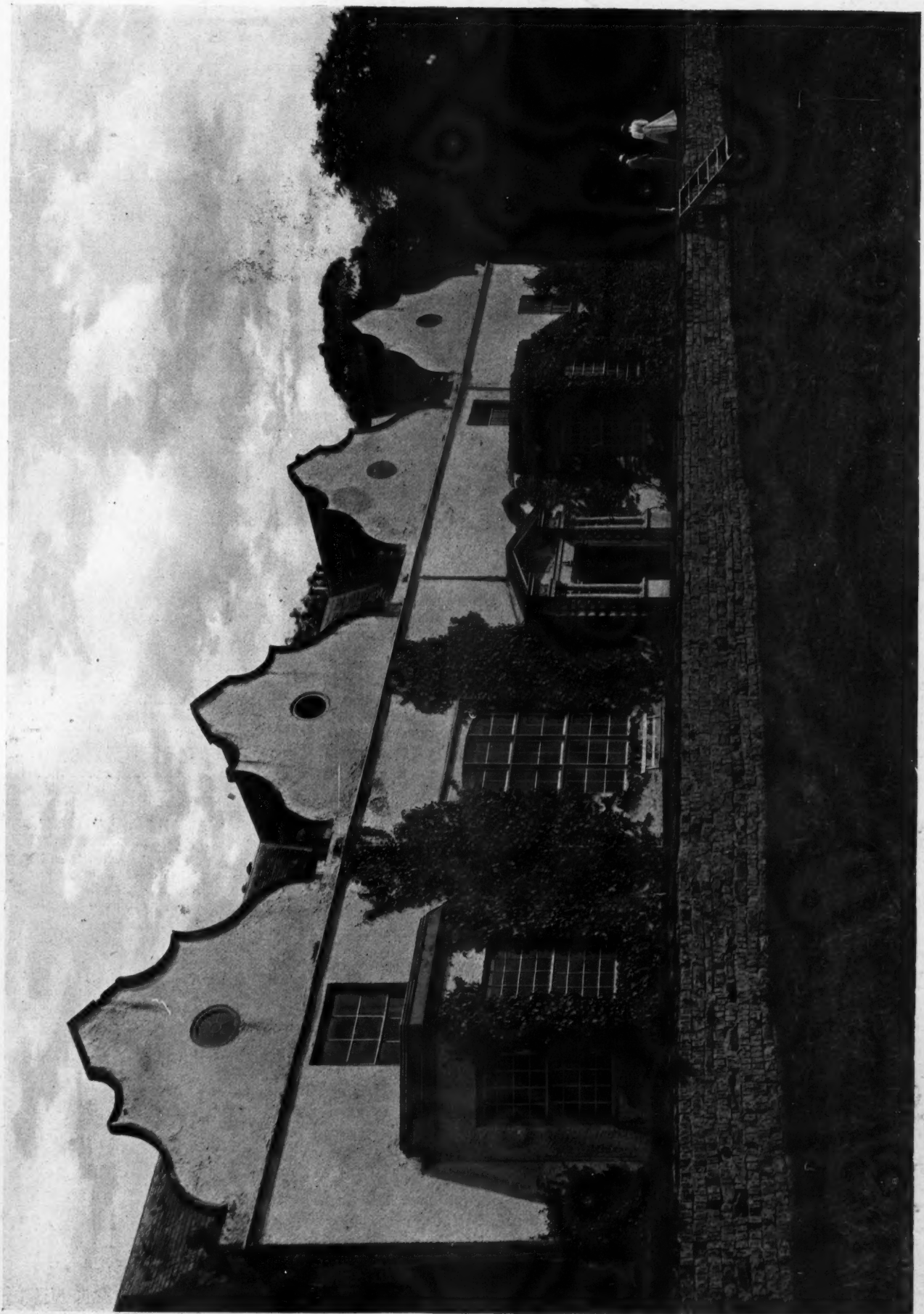


THERE are few places more interesting in Yorkshire than Norton Conyers, that quaint old house which we illustrate, pleasantly situated in the valley of the Yore, some four miles north of the city of Ripon. Those who, like Peter Bell, have "trudged through Yorkshire dales," have noticed in their wanderings many places akin to Norton Conyers. Some of them have, indeed, fallen from their high estate, and the peasant lights his fire upon the hearth about which lords and ladies gathered of yore. Above the mantel their armorial bearings may still remain, with many a device of ancient heraldry. Sometimes the Royal Arms are there, speaking of Stuart days, with some such inscription as "Feare God; Honour the King." Outside at the gates or over the door will be the date and some motto welcoming the guest, or it may be, as in a certain place that the writer knows of, bidding those who violate justice not to knock at that door. The ghosts of those times still linger in the panelled galleries, and are seen when the moonlight falls through the latticed window, or are heard with silken robes when the wind sighs in the night-time. About them are old gardens, weedy, and sometimes neglected, but often gay with colour and fragrant with sweetness.

Norton Conyers has in some ways been a fortunate place. In that beautiful country of the river Yore, famous for its spreading woods and green pastures, the memory of the Nortons still survives, and Norton Conyers was long associated with them, as afterwards with the gay and gallant Grahams. There is some difficulty in fixing the exact date when the old house was built, but no doubt can exist that it was standing in the reign of Henry VII. The ancient family of Norton were in possession from very early times, until they were involved in the Rising in the North. A remarkable chapter of English history was that in which those who clung to the old Faith staked their lives in its cause, many perishing, while others, like the Earl of Westmorland, who left historic Raby behind, and ancient Norton, fled to Flanders, and were known in England no more. The story of Norton was taken by Wordsworth as the theme of his "White Doe of Rylstone," in which he accepts the story, as told in the old ballad, of the mission of Earl Percy's "little foot page" to Master Norton. It was a summons he could not resist.

'Come you hither, my nine good sonnes,
Gallant men I trowe you bee;
How many of you, my children deare,
Will stand by that good erle and me?





..COUNTRY LIFE..

GARDENS OLD AND NEW.—NORTON CONYERS: THE WEST FRONT.

Copyright

"Eight of them did answer make,
Eight of them spake hastilie,
"Oh! father, till the day we dye,
We'll stand by that good erle
and thee!"

And so went forth ancient Norton with his banner bearing the cross and the five wounds of our Lord. His family were entirely ruined and its estates confiscated, though only one of his sons was executed, while he escaped himself to the Low Countries.

After the attainder of the Nortons, their estates were forfeited to the Crown, and subsequently Norton Conyers passed by a marriage with the Musgraves to the Grahams, descended through "John of the Bright Sword" from the Scottish Earls of Monteith and Strathearn. The first of the Grahams at Norton Conyers was the Royalist Sir Richard Graham, "of the Netherby clan," who had married the daughter and heiress of Thomas Musgrave. He was Gentleman of the Horse to James I., was created a Baronet in 1629, and distinguished himself at Edgehill and Marston Moor. The story is that he fled, desperately wounded, from the latter field, and was followed to Norton by Cromwell, who galloped into the hall and up the staircase, arriving just in time to shake Sir Richard in his bed before he died, and, as if to confound the incredulous, the print of the horse's hoof is still shown upon the stair. Sir Richard Graham was, indeed, wounded at Marston, but did not die until ten years afterwards.

The exterior of the house has perhaps little claim to architectural beauty, but it falls well into its charming surroundings, and curious, quaint, weird, and picturesque it must ever remain. It is surrounded by trees of great size, and the sycamores are perhaps not surpassed in England. On the northern side is the historic bowling green, on which King Charles I. is said once to



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THE HALL AND STAIRCASE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

have passed five consecutive days in that amusement while waiting for supplies.

The garden terrace, with the old gate of hammered iron between two ball-capped piers leading to the orangery, with that curious and remarkable sundial and the leaden vases, is in the midst of a delightful old-fashioned garden, fully appropriate to the venerable house and its green surroundings. Quaintness and old-world charm are everywhere. Look at the kneeling slave, at the leaden warrior in the glorious park, at the old chapel, at the entrance gates; linger on the terrace. It is an exceedingly attractive place, with a character quite its own.



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NORTH FRONT AND BOWLING GREEN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

It is delightful to look out from the windows of Norton Conyers over these surroundings. Within, the grand old hall covered with ancestral portraits, the broad oak staircase of the legend ascending to the big mullioned window with its many coats of arms, the oak-panelled king's room, occupied by more than one of the Stuart kings, the white-panelled parlour, the library, with its quaint window corners and its Romneys and Zoffanys, are all most charming and beautiful.

Many generations of Grahams had come and gone from the



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THE ENTRANCE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

old hall at Norton before the time of the last Sir Bellingham, born 1789, and died 1866—for seventy years a Baronet—a reign of extravagance which sadly encumbered the extensive family estates, inherited by him when but seven years old, on the death of his father (another Sir Bellingham) in 1796. Now for nearly twenty years Sir Reginald and Lady Graham have resided entirely at the home of his ancestors, and into no more fitting hands could this unique possession have fallen. Their care has been devoted to the preservation of the place in its inseparable old-world atmosphere, while the esteem and popularity which they enjoy in the neighbourhood were made widely manifest on the occasion of their eldest son's coming of age in June last year, when celebrations on a large scale took place amid great rejoicings. That gallant young officer, Lieutenant Reginald



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SOUTH LODGE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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KING JAMES'S ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Guy Graham, is now in South Africa with the Rifle Brigade, and was severely wounded at the Tugela River in December last, serving in the same regiment in which the present Baronet was appointed a captain at the early age of twenty, after previously serving in the Russian Campaign.

One point of special interest in connection with Norton Conyers is that some consider it to be the original of Thornfield Hall in "Jane Eyre," though others lean to the belief that that place was the Rydings, near Birstall. Mr. Erskine Stuart, in his "Brontë Country," expresses the belief that Charlotte Brontë had Norton Conyers in her mind, and he gives many reasons for his opinion. "There are also the rookery and the gardens, but this is not all. The interior of the hall, oak-panelled and covered with portraits of men in armour, the brass handles and double doors, the untenanted upper story, the position of the house-keeper's room, and the broad oak staircase, all answer to the description in 'Jane Eyre.' Again, the lovely prospect from the

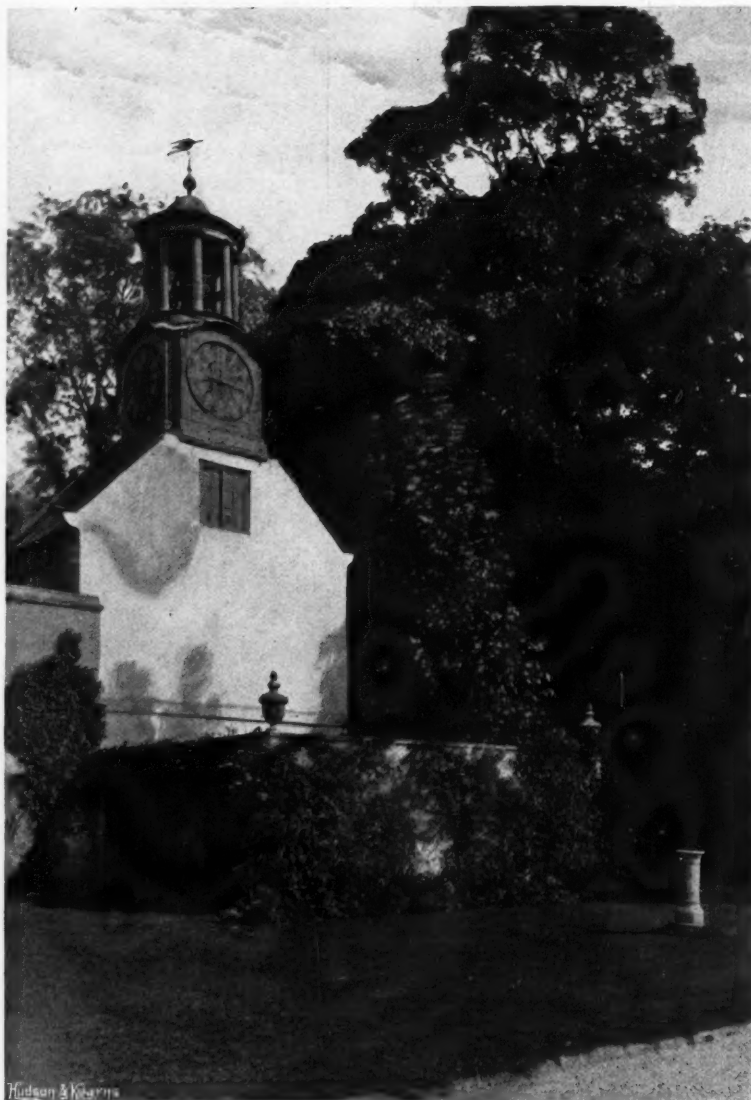
upper windows, of the broad park dotted with its ancient timber, and the Vale of York, the church at the gates (Wath), the distant hills, the *tout ensemble* of 'grove, pasture, and green hill,' might rather apply to Norton Conyers than to the Rydings.

Another link between this mansion and Thornfield is where we find 'the old time-stained marble tomb, where a kneeling angel guarded the remains of Damer de Rochester, slain at

Marston Moor, in the time of the Civil War. Now Sir Richard Graham the first baronet of Norton Conyers and of Netherby, County Cumberland, was mortally wounded at Marston Moor." In many ways, therefore, is Norton Conyers a remarkable and interesting place. It is situated, moreover, in a country rich in natural beauty and full of history, for, from famous Ripon you may pass by it to Jervaulx Abbey, to Middleham Castle, to Bolton Castle, the home of the Scropes, long a prison of Mary, Queen of Scots, and through all the beauties of glorious Wensleydale.

BOOKS OF THE DAY.

THE very title of the book which occupies my attention first is calculated to set some ardent gardeners itching for the tray. It is "The Art and Craft of Gardening," by Thomas H. Mawson, garden architect, published by Messrs. Batsford and by George Newnes, Limited. It is a handsome, well-equipped volume, with some really excellent drawings in perspective by Mr. C. E. Mallows. Mr. Mawson's views are embodied in one sentence: "I consider a formal treatment the one most likely to lead to satisfactory results." In other words, Mr. Mawson, who is of course very well known, is of the same school with Mr. Blomfield and the late Mr. Sedding and Mr. Inigo Thomas, who is now in South Africa; and it may be confessed, nay, even protested at once that the views of the formal school have never been better expressed than in this volume, which is at once learned, and practical, and well written. Of the book itself there is little more to be said save that even the controversial part of it is written in good taste and with an unusual display of consideration for the professors of a dissentient school. *O si sic omnes.* The truth of the matter is that there is far too much of the red rag and the bull about horticultural controversy. There are breasts in which the mere mention of "Capability Brown" rouses a storm of indignation; there are others, worthy and admirable in all other respects, whom the expression garden architect stirs to fury; and both parties are vocal and relentless. And what a pity it is, for there is room in this England of ours for all schools, and the true horticultural gospel is that of gentle tolerance and Catholic appreciation. My position, therefore, is that of one crying "Peace" where there is no peace. Doctrine apart, and upon that I express no opinion, this is a worthy and a very complete book, written by a man who understands his art and is in sympathy with Nature; and there is one little point, showing this sympathy with Nature, which I should like to emphasise. Mr. Mawson is a great advocate of the old-fashioned hedges, which gave shelter, and an enemy of the iron railings and wire fences which were at one time supposed to economise space. He is, in my judgment,



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THE OLD CHAPEL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

particular princess is not even amusing, and the recital of her adventures make one suffer from a most painful temptation to skip whole pages. The story is that the Prince of Rhodopé has only one child, a daughter. She is, therefore, his heiress, and a most high-spirited young woman. At the age of ten she amuses herself by smoking in the stables with the grooms. Her father's intended punishment for this escapade is to make her let the stable boys see it out to the bitter end—that is to say, he sees she is going to be sick, and he insists on her remaining in the stable-yard in full view of the men for the purpose. However, she escapes, and this curious father is enraged. At the age of fourteen she asks her tutor to elope with her, and failing to agree to that he teaches her *ecarté*. From that moment she is a confirmed gambler, and

later chooses her husband, Prince Petros of Herzegovina, because he can gamble and ride with grace. The reigning prince dies soon after this hopeful marriage. Being reigning princess is not sufficient amusement to this princess; and, indeed, it seems pretty dreary, for the business of the State as recorded was deadly dull, and the Society appears to have been non-existent. The Prince Petros kindly advises Princess Sophia to depart to Monte Carlo for the usual purpose whenever she feels inclined, and leave the management of affairs to him. Of course he plots to obtain entire possession of the principality, and of course she hears of the plot in time, comes back,



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NORTON CONYERS: THE GARDEN TERRACE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

triumphs over him, and sends him away like a footman detected in a fault. This hopeful pair have a son, Prince Leonard, who promises in early life to be all his parentage would lead one to expect. When thirteen he puts on girl's clothes in order to go to a woman's club used solely for gambling. His mother meets him there, and, strange to say, considers he would be better away from home, and sends him to Eton, and decides that it will be better for him not to see Rhodopé or his mother very often. However, she does visit him once when he is seventeen. She has him up to London, and takes him, among other places, to Madame Tussaud's. There they find an effigy of the Princess, described in the catalogue as "The Gambling Princess Sophia," with a short and uncomplimentary biography. The effigy is also uncomplimentary. This is the way in which this Royal lady and her son take it:

The room was almost empty, and Leonard put no bounds to his amusement. He stamped and choked, his mouth was full of laughter.

"Oh, oh!" he cried, "it is too funny! And, mother, I hear they are thinking of sending you to the Chamber of Horrors. I stayed in London last long leave and saw it. Oh, oh! the Chamber of Horrors, with murderers and Phoenix Park tragedians, and people who have their throats cut in their baths. Oh! I shall burst."

To her credit the Princess Sophia fails to see this exquisite joke at first. She dislikes the description of herself in print, and she does not admire the caricature of herself in wax.

Sophia watched him a moment with malignity; it seemed yet doubtful whether she would run her parasol through the face of the wax-work, or box his ears; but by degrees the infection of his merriment caught her, and, sitting down by him on a crimson-covered ottoman, she gave way to peal after peal of laughter. He had been on the verge of recovery, but they mutually infected one another, and in a few moments were equally lost to all power of speech, and could only point feebly and shakingly, as they shook and rolled on the sofa, at the greedy and clutching figure of the waxwork. There is much more of the description of the behaviour of this precious pair on this occasion. One rejoices soon after to find that Prince Leonard is sent away from Eton. He then travels, and his mother receives at intervals letters describing his travels, which turn out later to be, and are on the face of them, mere guide books. The Princess, meanwhile, gambles in every quarter of the globe, and in the lowest part of her own capital. "Certainly, also, there was a curious attraction to her in the very squalor of the surroundings. To be elbowed by hairy sailors, to be smothered in musk by the wives of smaller tradesmen excited her by its strange incongruity." On her next visit to Monte Carlo she is attracted by a mysterious masked gambler, invites him to a party, gambles with him through the night and into the early morning, finally stakes Rhodopé, loses, and finds the winner is her son Prince Leonard. This strange youth then becomes the ruler of Rhodopé, gives up gambling and all evil courses, stops the gambling propensities of his subjects, and makes of Rhodopé an earthly Paradise. So at last, very much at last, the book ends.

It is an odd thing that the one thing in "Sophia," by Stanley Weyman (Longmans), which seemed to me by its wild improbability to spoil the book, has just been proved in Sir Francis Jeune's court to have happened in real life. Hawkesworth, who is the villain of the book, succeeds in making the heroine—an heiress—fall in love with him. He is an adventurer of the worst type, and although her friends take every opportunity to explain that fact to her, and although he appears to bear no resemblance to a gentleman, but much to a hero of transpontine melodrama, Sophia is faithful. In fact, so firm is her faith that she goes to his rooms—after persecution by her family—in the evening in order to ask him to protect her from her family. Luckily for her he is out—but has left lying about on his table a memorandum. This memorandum, which effectually cures Sophia of her passion, sets down his nefarious schemes in black and white, put in the pages of a book which seems to be a "Who's Who" of 1742, compiled for the use of penniless adventurers of the eighteenth century in search of heiresses. Against her own name Sophia finds written in her lover's hand: "Has 6,000 guineas charged on T. M.'s estates. If T. M. marries without consent of guardians has £10,000 more. Mr. N. the same. T. is at Cambridge, aged eighteen. To make all sure T. must be married first—query Oriana if she can be found? Or Lady She—but boys like riper women. Not clinch with S. M. till T. is mated, nor at all if the little Cochrane romp (page 7)

can be brought to hand. But I doubt it; but S. M. is an easy Miss, and swallows all. A perfect goose."

As T. M. is Sophia's brother, and S. M. herself, here is the villain unmasked with a vengeance, and here would seem an absurdly ludicrous thing—that a man should have to make a note to refresh his memory of a sufficiently simple scheme of villainy to which he was devoting his whole time I said in my heart was folly, but I was the fool, not Mr. Weyman—*vide* the Law Courts. Otherwise the book is eminently readable, interesting, and pleasant. It is a book to sit down to on an idle day, and finish at a sitting. Perhaps Sophia is transformed from a silly, romantic girl to a most sober, sensible (albeit jealous) one a little quickly; but after all she was only eighteen, and girls develop strangely. Perhaps, too, her sister, Mrs. Northey, is rather too heartless and scheming and loud; but put it down to *autres temps, autres mœurs*, and what does it matter? To tell the story would spoil the reading of it, but it is a good bustling tale. Sir Harvey Coke is a most pleasant, high-souled gentleman, with the strangest knack of turning up when wanted by both Sophia and her brother Tom (the T. M. of the memorandum). The scene in the farmhouse visited by the small-pox is weird and impressive. The Lady Betty Cockrane is a charming romp, and finally, let no one fear that Mr. Stanley Weyman, in borrowing names from Mr. Harry Fielding, has also borrowed that gentleman's notions of morality.

A very few words, in addition to those which have already appeared in a

literary note, will serve for all that remains to be said about Mr. Clement Shorter's notes to Mrs. Gaskell's classic "Life of Charlotte Brontë" (Smith, Elder). As has been observed already, it is not an ambitious book. That is to say, Mr. Shorter, with rare good sense, has recognised the absolute finality of Mrs. Gaskell's work. But, if not ambitious, it is complete, and it will be a treasure house of information to members of the Brontë Society, and to all persons who, with a curiosity, which I confess puzzles me, desire to know every conceivable thing concerning a much admired author. The illustrations give one a good idea of the wild moorland in which the Brontës were nurtured, and in the notes some microscopical trifles are mentioned; but the additions to the published correspondence are considerable and valuable, and the chances of forming a more just and charitable estimate of the character of Charlotte's father, with whom Mrs. Gaskell undoubtedly dealt too severely, are vastly improved.

PRESERVING EGGS.

NOW that eggs are likely to become plentiful in all parts of the country a few hints upon preserving them for use later on may not be out of place, and these may be particularly worthy of the attention of thrifty housewives. To commence with, it may not be generally known that eggs may be so preserved in their shells that they will remain in perfectly good condition for eating for several

months, and, remarkable as it may appear to many people, there are several methods, all equally efficacious, for keeping them fresh, though at the same time success in every instance cannot be guaranteed.

The great object to be secured is to ensure the exclusion of air from the interior of the eggs, and for this reason it is necessary to devise some means for closing the pores of the shells. In order to accomplish this some people paint the outside of the eggs with a solution of starch water and rum, and then pack them in bran with the large end upwards. This method was adopted by the exhibitor of the box of preserved eggs which won first prize at the last Birmingham Agricultural Show, in a class of twenty-three exhibits, all of which had been lying at the hall in which the show was held, and in charge of the secretary, from August until December, when they were judged. The year previously the winning collection had been smeared with lard and salt, and packed in peat mould, whilst upon previous occasions first prizes have been secured by eggs merely rubbed over with the white of egg and packed in bran. Excellent



Copyright NORTON CONYERS: OLD GATES AND SUNDIAL. "C.L."

results have likewise attended the efforts of those who have coated their eggs with *Acacia* mucilage, or preserved them in a solution of soluble glass and water; whilst rubbing them with beeswax or with grease, and then wrapping them in paper and packing them in sharps or bran, or even common salt, has likewise kept the contents in good condition. Some people advocate a system of steeping the eggs in a solution of lime water, salt, and cream of tartar; but perhaps the greasing process, if succeeded by careful packing in bran after the eggs have been wrapped in paper, is the method which is as reliable as any, and this, in addition to its efficacy, is likely to commend itself to most people on account of its simplicity.

Under any conditions, however, it is necessary that the eggs which are selected for treatment should be perfectly fresh, and that the exclusion of air from their contents should be absolutely assured, whilst it stands to reason that the later in the summer they are treated the greater will be the prospect of their remaining in good condition until the winter, when they will be wanted. In the majority of cases, if properly attended to in the first instance, they will be found to be quite fit for poaching or frying after twelve or fifteen weeks have elapsed, and even when they may appear to be discoloured such eggs are equally good, if not better, for cooking purposes than some of the abominations which reach this country from distant parts of the continent.

Lesser Black-backed Gulls.

THE LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL is one of those many unfortunate people who have to suffer as the victims of mistaken identity. There are not a few of them among our friends in feathers. The keeper, despite your impera-



THE GULL.

tive injunctions, is apt to shoot the harmless kestrel because he "thought he was a sparrow-hawk," a statement that is more probably an offence against his veracity than his powers of observation; and similarly the lesser black-backed gull is sometimes shot by mistake for that murderer and marauder, his big black-backed cousin. It is a mistake that ought not to be made, for the big fellow is twice the other's size, and, moreover, the fact that he comes within gunshot, or allows himself to be so approached, is argument almost amounting to proof that he is not of the bigger kind. For no bird is much more wary than the big black-backed gull, as though he knew what his due reward should be for the many defenceless nests she has harried of their young with that great beak, for which even a young rabbit is not too large deer.

But the lesser black-backed is an innocent, law-abiding, and trustful citizen. He will follow at the tail of the plough in company with the common gulls and herring gulls—he is even rather of less size than the latter, though greatly bigger than the former—and habitually lives blamelessly on small marine things that are of no great use to his betters. The Farne Islands, that great nesting-place of the sea birds, is occupied by vast numbers of these fine birds that have a very curious effect when seen from a little distance, by reason of their invariable habit of resting with head to wind, so that every



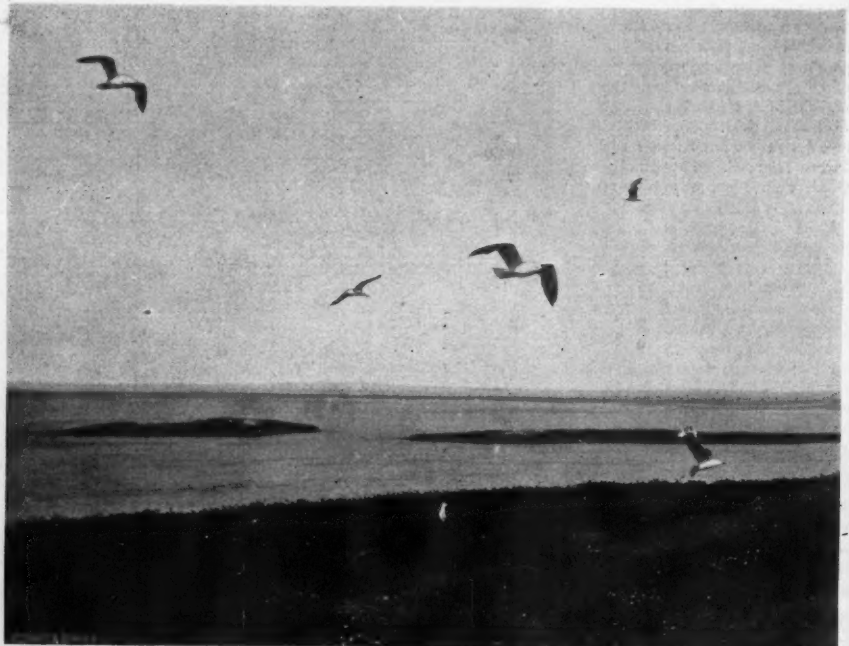
THE NEST.

member of the immense company faces the same way. But when the observer approaches, the host of gulls rises into the air, circling round with a great clamour that is nearly deafening.

THE NEST, as the illustration shows, is generally a considerable structure of carelessly thrown together stalks of various kinds, in which the champion, as usual, plays a great part. It is not a little curious that nowhere south of the Farne Islands do these birds nest on the East Coast, but that colonies of them are found in Cornwall, Devonshire, Wales, and so on up the West Coast. The difference of climate between the East Coast so far North and Cornwall is not slight, and one would have thought that, if this were a point to be considered by them, they might find many sites more resembling their Northern breeding-places on the Eastern, if not the Southern, shores of England. It is easily seen that the lesser black-backed gull does not depend at all, for the protection of its nests or young, on any likeness that they bear to their surroundings, but it would be a brave bird indeed that would attempt to harry a nest in the midst of the screaming company of the black-backs of the Farne Islands.

THE FLIGHT OF THE LESSER BLACK-BACK is rather dipping and heavy, with wings much bent.

It is not till they are three years old that the birds have the full handsome colouring of black backs and white under-parts that distinguishes them so boldly from the herring gulls and others. In the successive moults they gradually assume more and more of the perfect plumage, in place of the grey mottled down of their immaturity.



THE FLIGHT.



FALCONRY

A Falconer's Difficulties.—IV.

PROBABLY the highest accomplishment to which a falconer can attain is the faculty of keeping his hawks in condition. No beginner can hope without long experience to master this elaborate art, which requires, as we shall see, quite an intimate acquaintance with the signs and tokens which proclaim a bird to be in good health, and also with the symptoms—often subtle and obscure—which betray the fact that there is something wrong. For, in order that a hawk should do herself full justice in the field, she ought not to be merely healthy, but something more. The capture of one bird in the air by another must always be something of a feat; and those who doubt this will be very much astonished if they ever have the opportunity of looking at trained hawks which are flown by an indifferent trainer. The owner of a hawk is like the owner of a thoroughbred horse. If his ambition is only to reduce the creature to obedience, to obtain the command over it, and to have it "quiet in harness," his task is comparatively easy. But if he intends to enter it for a race—in the case of a horse, against other horses,

as the tame one. She feeds daily on quarry which she has herself taken. She knows, moreover, that she is dependent on her own exertions for her food. She bathes where she likes, and dries herself where and as she likes. She sleeps, perches, and spends her time in places of her own choosing. When she feels lazy she rests; and when she feels restless she roams about. She airs herself whenever she chooses in the cool clear air of the sky. In short, she is free, instead of being a prisoner, and to most intents a slave. Is it surprising that in health and strength—to say nothing of good spirits and courage—she is incalculably superior to her captive sisters and brothers? There are other grave disadvantages under which these last must suffer more or less. The trained hawk, before she has learnt to bear patiently the yoke of servitude, has been subjected to a *régime* which, however tenderly applied, has certainly not been calculated to leave altogether unbroken the spirit which once animated her. She has been fed upon cold meat instead of the warm fresh-killed animals which she would have devoured as soon as plucked. She has been dragged about, while standing hooded on a man's fist, in the cold and disagreeable wind, and probably sometimes in the rain. She has felt the bitterness of bondage when fettered and tripped up by the hateful jess.

All these and many other disadvantages heavily handicap the man who attempts to do with his trained hawk anything which is at all on a par with what can be done by the wild one. If such an attempt is to succeed, it is manifest that the trainer must use all possible endeavours to minimise, and not to aggravate, the discomforts and privations which his *protégés* have to endure. And the beginner can seldom do this. He is too much occupied with thinking what he ought himself to do to spare much thought for what his patients would like him to do, or even what will make them more disposed to cheerfully tolerate their fate. Thus, while he is curing them of their fierceness and shyness, he is also unconsciously depriving them of their courage and love of flying. While he is reducing them to obedience, he is undermining their strength; and as they lose their wildness, so they lose their natural

powers of chasing and killing. Few men, until after many attempts, and many disappointments, can succeed in reclaiming an eyess, and far less a passage-hawk, without having once reduced her to a condition which they know is too poor. The bodily condition of a hawk is only to be properly gauged by symptoms which to the unpractised eye are imperceptible. Even the rough test which is made by feeling the breast bone with the forefinger is not easy to apply. Even the experiments made by swinging the lure, to ascertain whether a hawk on her block is keen to fly to it, are apt to be misleading. But there are other signs still less easy to understand. The practised eye of an old falconer will see by the attitude of a hawk and by her movements in the air whether she is fit to fly, and flies with pleasure and credit to herself, and in accordance with the conclusions which he so draws from day to day, he will regulate her allowance of exercise and food, and perhaps occasionally of medicine.

The conditioning of different hawks may involve very



TOM ALLAN, MR. C. E. RADCLYFFE'S FALCONER.

or, in the case of a hawk, against other birds—then the attention bestowed upon it must be of a very different kind. It is to be feared that a good many of our modern aspirants to the name of falconer begin by imagining that when they have "manned" their hawk and taught her to come to the fist or the lure, they have already reclaimed, or, as they call it, "trained" her. The consequence is that if the "trained" hawk does achieve any success at wild quarry, she owes it to the fact that, more by accident than design, and more by nature than by art, she was in excellent health and fettle at the time. Much more often a man's first hawk, when taken out to fly at game, or any other wild creature, makes a feeble and futile effort, and disappoints the sanguine hopes of the trainer as well as the less confident expectations of his friends.

Oh! but the wild hawks catch their quarry easily enough, and why should not the tame ones? Well, there are many very good reasons. The life of a wild hawk is altogether different, and always must be so. She takes fifty times as much exercise

different systems of treatment. In all cases the object is the same, viz., to keep the patient in as high a condition—that is to say, as robust—as can be made consistent with keenness and obedience. But one falcon may eat habitually some ounces more than another, and yet be more ready to fly and sooner than that other. One merlin will take nearly a full crop every wing, and yet be as tame and as ready to fly to the fist on the following morning as anyone can desire, while another, if fed in a similar way, will for half-a-day afterwards scorn to come down without lure or fist. Look at the two peregrines in the first illustration. Let us suppose that they are eyesses from the same nest, that they have had each exactly the same share of attention, the same diet, and the same treatment. Yet the tiercel stands unhooded quite quietly on the owner's arm, and may be so carried perhaps for quite a little walk, whereas the falcon, if her hood was removed, might "bite-off" at once and make a terrible to-do. How is this? Simply the character of the lady does not happen to be so placid and contented as that of her brother. Will the falconer, then, in order to bring both hawks to the same level of tameness, shorten the rations of the falcon, so as to induce her to adopt the same tranquillity which already reigns in the tiercel's mind? If he is a beginner, and has no one to advise him, he may make this great mistake. But if he is wise he will not care a jot about the matter. If the gentleman is of such a philosophic turn of mind that he will sit still within a foot of his master's face, and not, by plunging about, endanger his feathers and cause a commotion and trouble, so much the better. But if the lady, though she won't do this, will do all that is really important—will come to the call and lure, and will stand well to the hand—why, then in Heaven's name allow her to be as fat and well-living as she is, and be thankful that she is no thinner. This is quite well understood by the experienced and able professional falconers who are represented in our illustrations, and by the still more distinguished amateurs under whom they serve. To these the art of dieting hawks is almost the A B C of their knowledge. With beginners it is a very different matter. The margin between overfeeding and underfeeding is not so very wide. And when it has been overstepped, especially on the side of excess, the corrective process must be very cautiously applied. Once let a hawk get below par, even for a day, and you may find that it takes you a week or more to bring her back to a fit state.

The appetite of a hawk is often, but not always, a pretty good guide to inform the trainer how long a meal should be prolonged. But when, after careful consideration, a feed of certain proportions has been fixed beforehand as the right allowance for any one individual, beware of allowing your kinder feelings to be aroused by the greedy insistence with which that sly impostor tries to make it plain to you that he has not yet had near enough. Some hard-heartedness is required, when a tiercel has stood for half-an-hour in a tree, has then at last, as a great favour, come down, and has had a good half crop on the lure, to put him away remorselessly on the perch, when it is quite clear that a few ounces more would cause him a joy unspeakable. Yet if, allowing your compassionate soul to be moved by his appealing gestures and plausible ways, you indulge him with just a few mouthfuls extra, you may find that next day, instead of merely keeping you waiting with your lure for an hour, he disregards altogether both you and it, and makes a night of it, with the chance of killing something for himself on the following morning when you are not yet on his track. It is no great hardship for a hawk which is in high condition, and which has had a good square meal to-day, to pass the whole of to-morrow fasting—if he has a mind to it, I mean—when he knows or thinks that he is tolerably sure of a good feed the next morning.

When a hawk is once reasonably fat and strong, and has been kept so for some days, she may be maintained in the same condition with much smaller allowances than one which once has been allowed to get at all thin. The danger now is rather that of overfeeding her. Wild hawks are almost all a bit overfed. They are seldom what a falconer would call keen after their quarry. That is, they do not care much to fight out a long struggle in the

air, unless it is for sport or for the satisfaction of their *amour propre*, or because they are flying in company with a comrade, and don't like to be beaten by her. And if you tried to keep your trained falcon as fat as a wild one—which it would be madness to attempt—you would find probably not only that she was disdainful of your dead lure, but also left some of the hard flights, taking it for granted that before she lived much longer she would meet with an easier one.

All trained hawks may be said to have exchanged their original nature for one that is new, and to some extent artificial. But a leavening of the old temper and disposition still clings to the convert in her regenerate state, and may be quite well acquiesced in by the most exacting trainer. It would be stupid as well as needless to eradicate the old character because it involved the trouble of humouring any particular pupil in any harmless way. Thus some goshawks persistently prefer the lure to the fist, while merlins will occasionally fly readily to the hand when they won't come to the lure. A man who knows how to make some allowances, and relax in special cases some hard-and-fast rules of strict discipline, will find that he can keep some of his hawks in higher condition, and therefore greater strength, than if he had made them all pass through the mill of an identical code of laws. But let not the tyro think that he can take as many liberties, indulging his hawks as a veteran can venture upon. Caution is the watchword and form any day, and a really fat hawk is the privileged possession of the old and tried falconer.



C. Reid. JAMES RETFORD, MAJOR C. HAWKINS FISHER'S FALCONER.

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Between a short-winged hawk which is in condition and one which is not the difference is so marked, that a special and rather quaint name has long been used to describe the former state. Everyone who knows anything about the training of goshawks or sparrow-hawks is aware that it is no manner of use to attempt to fly them when they are not in "yarak." Wild specimens of these species are presumably always in this convenient state of mind and body, or this humour, as it may be called. But the goshawk which has been left idle on the perch to her own meditations is apt to soon get "out of yarak," that is to say, to lapse into a moody, lazy, and rather dejected condition, and refuse altogether, when called upon, to make any exertion. Only a large amount of carrying on the fist, and of personal attention from one or more human beings, can be relied upon to restore to such a sufferer her interest in the chase, or even in mundane affairs generally. Now it would be very absurd to talk of getting a peregrine or a lanner into "yarak." But none the less it is true that such a hawk, as well as her more plebeian cousins, may by neglect or inaction become affected with a dulness and depression of spirits very similar to the malady which spoils for sport the short-winged hawk. If is almost worth the while, therefore, of the trainer of peregrines to keep a sparrow-hawk or two for a while, so that by his experience of her appearance in the two conditions, and of the means most proper for raising her from the one to the other, he may obtain hints for the cunning management of the falcon or tiercel which looks dull and sad. Occasionally he may vastly improve the

condition of his charges by means of a mild dose, which will in many cases work miracles in the apparently useless hawk. But the whole art of physicking requires treatment by itself. Until the young falconer knows something about this art, and a good deal about "condition," he may safely assure himself that if his hawk flies badly, the fault is in his own ignorance.



PREPARING FOR SUMMER.

THIS is one of the busiest seasons of the year in the outdoor garden, as the plants for a summer display must be put out soon; indeed, in quite mild districts it is safe to trust them in the open before the first week in June, the time to plant in Midland and Northern Counties. As a rule, however, early June is the most favourable season for putting out sub-tropical plants, which are quickly destroyed by frost. Make good use of Dahlias, of which there are many noble kinds in gardens, especially of the Cactus race. A list of the finest kinds for form and colour was recently given in COUNTRY LIFE, but it is a mistake to overload the soil with manure. This merely stimulates leaf growth at the expense of flower production. It is better to apply liquid stimulants or mulchings later on, when the plants are in need of good food. In this way one can regulate the quantities of manure bestowed. Avoid overcrowding, particularly in the case of sub-tropicals, which are of remarkably quick and spreading growth. Harden off at once all plants intended for the open ground. Unless this is done, growth will be seriously crippled, and this means that flowers will be retarded. Plant some Verbenas, a flower we should like to see revived; it is one of the good bedding plants of a former age, and seedlings give a wonderful variety of interesting colours. Continue to thin out seedlings. Overcrowding means poor growth and few flowers. Make good use of *Nicotiana sylvestris*, a new Tobacco, with all the finer attributes of *N. affinis*, without its unfortunate habit of closing its flowers during sunshine. Strive to obtain simple effects, not quixotic mixtures of colours utterly unsuitable to associate together. A rich scarlet with white, or used alone, is more pleasing than the terrible results of trying experiments with purples and maroons.

SINGLE CAMELLIAS.

We must confess to a great affection for the single Camellias, and welcome a note from a correspondent about this interesting group of indoor plants: "If one thing could bring the Camellia back to its former popularity, it would be the introduction of single forms. Perhaps one of the loveliest is one named Kotope. The petals are large, five in number, and pure white. But what adds so much to the beauty of this particular variety is the number of stamens. The filaments which support the golden anthers are quite 1 in. in length and of a soft creamy colour. All single Camellias possess this attractive feature of numerous anthers, but I have not met with one kind that has filaments of so great a length as the variety under notice. They are certainly much longer than the old *alba simplex*, hitherto one of the most beautiful of single white Camellias. Another single variety of distinct beauty is *Adelina Patti*. Were it not for the prominent anthers, the salmon-pink and almost round flower resembles a large zonal *Pelargonium*, each petal being edged with white. The single red upon which the named varieties are grafted is not to be despised. The anthers are golden-yellow, contrasting well with the bright rose-crimson petals."

THE GESNER AND DARWIN TULIPS.

We were lately in the nursery of Messrs. Barr and Sons at Long Ditton, near Surbiton, and the chief interesting feature was the Tulip, represented by the Gesner and Darwin kinds. During the month of May Gesner's Tulip is more splendid than any other flower of the open garden; its colour is superb, crimson, with blue-black centre, an intense association, appreciated when the hot sun opens out the petals to drink in every ray. Thanks to the many articles and notes that have appeared upon these late Tulips, they are no longer strangers to our gardens, and we understand that last autumn the demand exceeded the supply. Tulipa Gesneriana, it may interest our readers to know, is the parent of the florist's Tulips, the byblemens, bizarres, and others, and it is seldom that the parent of a wonderful race is in itself a flower of noble beauty. The "Darwins" are a group of late kinds, named in honour of Darwin, and represent distinct and interesting colours, some almost black, as in the variety Vulcan, others rich bronze, salmon, rose, purple, and intermediate shades. These self late Tulips are enjoyable in groups, but the more decided colours are remarkably effective amongst shrubs. We remember a group of Tulipa Gesneriana amongst Quince bushes, and the effect was something to remember. From the hillside opposite this dash of scarlet was plainly visible, and this is the picture we delight in, a positive relief to the monotonous round of things planted in the same way, as if to imitate one's neighbour were a virtue.

A LARGE LEMON.

Large Lemon fruits, sent from the Royal Gardens, Kew, to a recent meeting of the Royal Horticultural Society interested greatly the many visitors present, and were regarded by some as abnormal developments of the Lemon familiar to everyone. This is not so. The fruits represented a form of the true Lemon, and it is worth mentioning they each measured 8 in. in length and 6 in. in width. Although the plant, which is in the Mexican house at Kew, is only four years old, it has reached a height of 10 ft., and a fruit was sent to Kew by Miss Laura Metford Badcock, Fens George, Taunton, this having been gathered from a tree in the garden of Mrs. Tucker, Leigh Court, Angers Leigh, Wellington, Somerset. Subsequently Miss Tucker sent two cuttings. The letter of Miss Badcock respecting this Lemon is interesting. It is as follows: "The history of the big Lemon is this: The original plant was grown from seed by my great aunt, Miss Metford, at Hook House, Taunton, in the very early years of this century, and was kept there till 1868, when the place was sold at my grandfather's death, and the plant given to a friend, who let it die. The present and only plant was grown from a cutting of that tree given by my grandfather, Dr. Metford, to Mrs. Tucker, and now owned by Miss Tucker, who

sometimes gives us a Lemon from it. I will ask her to forward a few cuttings from the tree to you. My people were so proud of this tree that I should be glad if you could name it 'Metford's Lemon.'"

THE DOUBLE-FLOWERED GEAN OR CHERRY (*PRUNUS AVIUM FL.-PL.*).

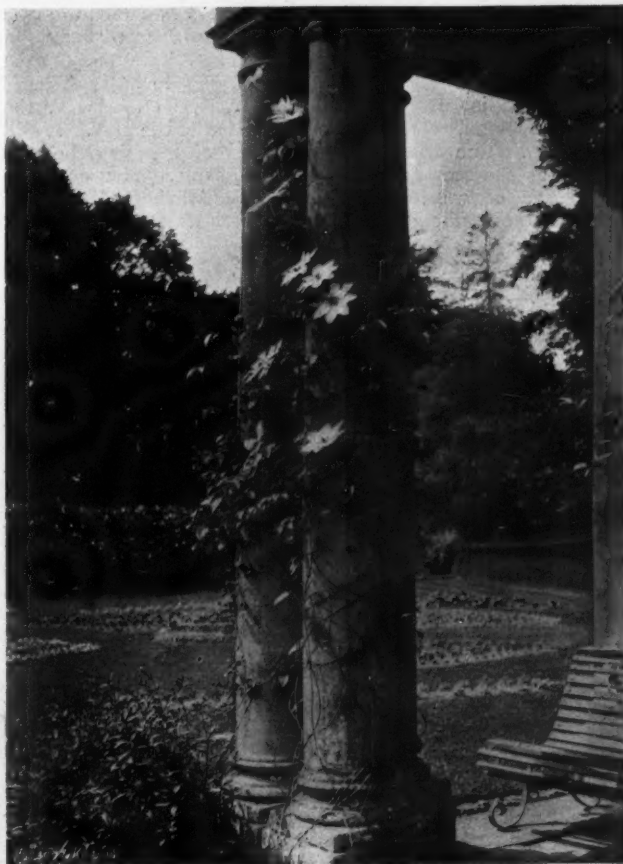
There is no lovelier tree in flower at this time, and that is saying much, than this *Prunus*. It is familiar to many, and a form of the wild Cherry, which has given rise to the luscious varieties of our orchards and gardens. It is a tree of surpassing beauty, a veritable snowdrift, so thickly are the branches and shoots enveloped in pure white blossom. We remember looking up into this snow-cloud recently, and could scarcely discern a twig, simply a mass of flowers, each a rosette, hanging thickly from the topmost twig to the lower branches, even right into the centre against the sturdy stem. This is a Cherry one may recommend with perfect safety. It never seems to fail, defies frosts and harsh winds, and every year as the flowering of May comes round display this wonderful wealth of blossom.

THE FINEST EARLY TULIPS.

We were much interested in a trial of early-flowering Tulips recently in the Royal Horticultural Society's Garden at Chiswick. No fewer than 200 kinds were under trial, and it is needless to remark that the flowers presented a remarkable mass of colour. It will interest readers to know the names of the kinds especially selected from this vast throng, and they are as follows: Mons Tresor.—This was sent for trial by the well-known Tulip growers of Ireland, Messrs. Hogg and Robertson, Dublin. It is a sturdy variety, dwarf, and bearing deep golden yellow flowers of beautiful form. Ophir d'Or, also sent by this firm, is one of the richest in colour of all the early Tulips, and is fairly well known. As in the last-mentioned, the flowers are deep golden colour, but very distinct, being of a globular form. It is only 6 in. in height, and is a Tulip to select for edging. La Matelas has silvery pink flowers with white edge, an effective colour when seen in a group. Maes was unquestionably the finest Tulip in the collection. This is a variety that should be made a note of for its brilliant colour, pure scarlet, and seen in the sunshine almost painfully bright. It develops to a height of about 8 in. Pottebakker White is a well-known white Tulip, and the most beautiful of its kind. Bacchus has deep crimson flowers on stems not more than 6 in. in height. Proserpine is a Tulip much planted in the parks for the sake of its bright rose-coloured flowers, purplish on the outer face of the petals. Vermilion Brilliant is the Tulip used largely for forcing, and is also—because of its dwarfness, as it rarely exceeds 6 in. in height—used for edging beds. The flowers are robust, so to say, and therefore last longer than those of thinner texture. Epaminondas is rose-scarlet with carmine flush. Keizerskroon is remarkably showy. It has large globular flowers of red and scarlet, and is as well known as many of the early kinds. It is tall too, the stems reaching a height of quite 10 in. Van de Neer has purplish flowers, and is excellent for forcing. Many of these Tulips are, of course, familiar enough.

THE INIQUITY OF CARPET BEDDING.

A revival of this worst form of summer gardening is attempted in some places, and money and labour are wasted upon petty scrolls and devices as wretched as the plants used in their formation. Dragons of fearful device worked upon the lawn, or a cockatoo of impossible shape in some corner sacred to this artistic delinquent of animate Nature display something more than degraded taste; they represent waste of money and labour. Hundreds of little hothouse plants must be used in these designs, plants depending for their effect upon leaf-colouring, and the correct representation of the thing portrayed is kept by weekly clipping and pinching to prevent the growth outrunning its allotted space. If those who indulge in these strange fancies can give solid reasons for



CLEMATIS ON PILLARS OF VERANDA OF THE MANOR HOUSE, GONCH.

their introduction into the flower garden, we shall be pleased to publish them as interesting de ences of a fashion uglier than crinolines and big hats. May we be spared a fever of scarlet Geraniums, blue Lobelias, dingy Alternantheras, and a Pyrethrum that looks sick. The people who indulge in these fancies should really have compassion upon their fellow creatures.

FORSYTHIA SUSPENS.

We write this note to remind those who have seen the graceful *F. suspensa*, and wish to obtain it, that there is more than one Forsythia, and a much stiffer, more solid kind, so to say, is occasionally substituted for it, namely, *F. viridissima*, which is quite a bush. *F. suspensa* is a beautiful rambling shrub, if one may so call it, sending out long, graceful growths covered with yellow bloom in spring. Seen rambling over some rough rock garden, fence, bank, and similar spots it gives the effect of golden rain. One need trouble very little about it, as its growth is vigorous, and it succeeds in almost any position.

HARDY FLOWERS NATURALLY SHOWN.

We were much pleased with the exhibit of the Guild of Hardy Plant Company at the recent show of the Royal Horticultural Society. The Alpines

were in baskets, and displayed in quite a natural way, as if a piece of the rock garden had been taken bodily to the show-room. This is, of course, the only true way to reveal the beauty of Alpine flowers, and we hope that other firms will follow more often the example set. At the Temple exhibitions of recent years we have seen many charming exhibits of this kind. There is far too much crowding up of flowers at our shows, as if effect is only possible when the things are bunched together without a thought as to their natural beauty. Surely a better lesson is taught when the exhibits are set out boldly and clearly without any muddling up to destroy all repose and charm.

CATALOGUES RECEIVED.—Roses, Wm. Paul and Son, Waltham Cross, Herts.—Ginseng roots and surplus stock of trees, shrubs, etc., H. P. Ke'sey, Tremont Building, Boston, Mass., U.S.A.—General catalogue, A. de Clercq von Ghysseghem, 49, Chaussée de Gontrode, Ledeborg-gand, Belgium.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.—We are always pleased to assist our readers in matters of difficulty concerning the garden. We are also in touch with many first-class gardeners, and shall be happy to recommend one to any who may require the services of a reliable man.



AT THE THEATRE

THAT Signora Duse is entitled to the rank of the greatest actress in the world there will be few to deny. In none other is so fully developed that perfection of art in which there is no trace of art. None other can so completely sway an audience without a suggestion of

effort. None other can express quite so much by the movement of an eye, a hand.

And yet—and this is the curious part of it—Mme. Duse is not an "impersonator," and there can be no doubt that impersonation is one of the elementary necessities of the art of acting. To impersonate, to distinguish between one character and another, to give to each an individuality of its own, to make us forget the artist in the character. But we must "hedge" a little. Signora Duse does make us forget herself in the part she is playing, but—it is a most difficult thing to express one's meaning—she is always Duse. She acts, so to speak, the universal Woman, not the particular woman of the play. A still finer shade. She is always the woman of the play, but the woman—as she sees her—is always the same. Her acting is like a kind of composite photograph. All her women are blended into one all-embracing, fascinating, adorable example of femininity.

The genius of Duse is such that she is a law unto herself. One may criticise it, but one must accept it, bow down to it. Though her methods of expression of the emotions and the passions take from those emotions and passions any particular application to the psychology—one must use this hackneyed word—of the woman she is interpreting, her expression of them strikes one with a marvellous vividness and truth because she wrings from them their universal truth and meaning. It is so in her "Magda" and her Paula Tanqueray. Each is superb, but they are not Magda or Paula particularly. Yet they are absolutely convincing because, watching her, one sees their emotions through the medium of a wonderful personality with the most perfect art of expression at command, not the art of differentiation, but the art of showing to perfection those emotions as emotions, untinged by any modifications of a particular character.

As "Magda" Signora Duse gave us an entrancing picture of what Woman in the abstract would do and feel were she placed in the position of Sudermann's heroine. So with "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray." The distinguished audience at the Lyceum revelled in the humanity, the pathos, the beauty of her acting of the character of Mr. Pinero's heroine. But there was nothing in it to suggest the woman she was before she became the Second Mrs. Tanqueray. Rather was it the presentment of a woman who, by mere accident, had been what she had been, of a pure-souled creature who now, for the first time, was in her right place, a soul tortured by a maternal love for a young girl, wracked by jealousy. The play became, not a study of the impossibility of a "woman with a Past" developing into a humdrum wife, notwithstanding the excellence of her intentions, but of a

childless woman hungering for the love of a young girl and finding that love denied her. That is really what it comes to. Nevertheless, to watch Signora Duse is an artistic delight; one forgets everything under the magic of her genius.

The ladies and gentlemen who act with her are clever and painstaking, but they lack distinction. They do not attempt to suggest English people, though they remain English in the Italian version.

It is to be hoped that "Quo Vadis" will put the quietus upon the exploitation of religion upon the stage. Nothing more repellent than the references to sacred names and subjects—dragged in without cause or effect—could be imagined, and one is forced into the belief that the object of it all is to attract to the pay-boxes that public which made "The Sign of the Cross" a phenomenal success. But "The Sign of the Cross" was a powerful play, and, frank as was its appeal to the religious-minded, there was in it nothing approaching the familiar treatment of sacred things which we find in the version of "Quo Vadis" seen at the Adelphi Theatre. Besides, "The Sign of the Cross" was original in idea, and was a dramatic story, neither of which is "Quo Vadis." From all points of view the well-wisher of the stage will trust there will be no more of these "ear'y Christian" dramas, which threaten to become hardy annuals in the theatre.

Mr. Louis N. Parker has completed the English version of Rostand's "L'Aiglon," which Mr. Charles Frohman, that theatrical Napoleon, intends to produce in the United States. Possibly, in the years to come, we may be given the opportunity of seeing it here, after America has thoroughly digested it; for London, being merely the capital of the British Empire, always waits patiently until every other portion of the globe has expressed its opinion on the most important efforts of contemporary dramatic art. Mme. Sarah Bernhardt and M. Coquelin, who are to join forces for a tour through America, will, perhaps, deign to come hither and enable us to enjoy the artistic feast of seeing two such incomparable artists in the same company, performing in the same plays. Mrs. Patrick Campbell is going to Paris in July to perform in Mme. Bernhardt's Renaissance Theatre there. Will not France return the compliment?

"Rip Van Winkle" promises to be a very pleasant entertainment at Her Majesty's Theatre, where it will probably be presented some time in June. With Mr. Tree as Rip and Mr. Franklin McLeay as Derrick, there will be some fine play of character between the apparently foolish ne'er-do-well who is yet so shrewd, and the scheming Derrick, who finds that Rip is not such a simpleton as he seems on the surface. Already Mr. Tree, Mr. McLeay, Miss Lily Hanbury—the Gretchen—and the other members of the company are at home in their new characters, and the pretty scenes are ready for use whenever they may be required. The public, of course, will expect something very weird and beautiful from Her Majesty's Theatre's representation of the Catskill Mountains, and the public is not likely to be disappointed.

Mr. George Bernard Shaw has explained why the dramatic critics are unable properly to appreciate his works. These unregenerate ones come to the theatre to judge with an understanding and an imagination dulled by alcohol, nicotine, and the flesh of ox and sheep. Mr. Shaw, being a non-smoker, a drinker of water, and a vegetarian, sees life more clearly, more completely, than they see it. This, perhaps, explains the reason of the endorsement of the verdict of the critics by the general public, which also sees things through the distorted vision which comes from indulgence in beef, beer, and "baccy." After all, it is of little use presenting a play to an audience in a language it does not understand. And, really, the conventional author who writes his plays after a ham-and-egg breakfast, with a pipe in his mouth, is not necessarily inartistic. Because, if the stage is the mirror of our time, it should certainly smack of the habits of our time, even such heinous faults of our time as come from the Welsh hills, the



Burton waters, and the Havana plantations. Mr. Shaw's play, "You Never Can Tell," was withdrawn from the Strand Theatre after a week's run.

We have had—to our credit, be it said—plays by Robert Louis Stevenson, in collaboration with Mr. Henley, produced on our stage, "Admiral Guinea"—which should certainly not have been left in the obscurity of one matinée given by the New Century Theatre—and "Beau Austin," which Mr. Tree represented at the Haymarket. Now America has another Stevenson play, only this time it is an adaptation of one of his novels, not a play directly from his pen. Mr. Otis Skinner, a popular American actor, has dramatised "Prince Otto," with, apparently, great success. The story of the play follows that of the novel with considerable closeness, and the result appears to be, from Press criticisms which have arrived from America, highly satisfactory. The scenes take place in the cottage of the peasant farmer Leopold in the principality of Kronefeld, the princess's salon at the palace at Lauterheim, the council chamber of the palace, a state apartment in the palace, the fortress of Drachenstein, and once again in Farmer Leopold's cottage. All this sounds very appetising, and we should be glad of the opportunity of making the acquaintance of the play on this side of the Atlantic.

The management of the Globe Theatre will shortly produce a new three-act comedy by Mr. Pigott, entitled "The Old Love," in succession to "Nurse." We welcome the change, for any change must be an improvement, and we hope the Globe management will succeed if its effort is worthy of success. The services of Mr. Lewis Waller and a strong company have been secured.

PHŒBUS.

Racing Notes.

So everybody was wrong, and Sirenia won the Jubilee Stakes at Kempton Park on Saturday. We are all remembering now what a very fine mare Mr. Neumann's black is. We had had a hint the previous day when



W. A. Rouch.

THE CLUB LAWN AT CHESTER.

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Waterhen very nearly won the Stewards' Handicap. Bi kenhead beat her, it is true, but only by a rush, and possibly the win was as much due to Mornington Cannon's patience and fine judgment as to anything else.

Anyway, Waterhen's performance ought to have given people a hint. But many had eyes for nothing but Goblet, and others for Scintillant. Rickaby rode a good race, and won apparently with ease. Goblet made no show, and Scintillant even less.

Sirenia was formerly the property of Colonel A. Paget, and she is the first mare to win a Jubilee Handicap. She had, however, won over the old Jubilee course, for last October she won the Duke of York's Stakes after a bumping finish with Mount Prospect. We ought to have remembered the race, for the



W. A. Rouch.

THE PARADE FOR THE CHESTER CUP.

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first, second, and third were by Gallinule, which was remarkable enough. As a two year old Sirenia won four races in Ireland and ran once unplaced at Ascot as a three year old before her Kempton win. Her chance was estimated at 30 to 1 in that race.

Very few people will be surprised at J. H. Martin's suspension by the stewards. Either he cannot keep his horses straight and is a danger, or he will not, in which case the conclusion is obvious. I am not sure that he was to blame for the Schoolbook filly being left behind at Chester, but I have been expecting that Mr. Musker's two year olds will begin to show the results of bad handling before long. I have been watching the career of the American jockeys very carefully this season, and I am now sure that they owe their success to their very superior knowledge of pace and to their method of riding a race right out. We have had two examples of this during the past week, and although it would perchance be too much to say that Roughside would not have won at Chester or Altair at Kempton if ridden otherwise than they were, yet that is the opinion to which I incline after careful discussion of the point with several good judges of racing. The much-talked-of questions of the position of the rider is a very secondary matter. Of course the attitude of the jockey



W. A. Rouch.

THE STAND AT CHESTER.

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catches the eye and impresses the mind of the looker-on, but it is the least important part of the system of riding. Kempton Park is a charming place to race at, and our close observations of horses and their performance is apt to be distracted by the charms of the Blue Hungarian Band and the luxuries of luncheon; but not even these attractions could make Saturday anything but a very dreary and very chilly day; not at all the sort of day to lose our money on.

The friend who last week urged upon me the consideration of Chevening as a Derby candidate has pointed out that there is some good money going upon him, and that Osbeck is probably a much better horse this season than most of us had thought. I am sure that Chevening has a claim on our careful consideration. He has won his races in good form; his sire is Orion, a horse which has never been estimated yet at his true position. It seems necessary to turn back for a moment to the form of Calveley in the Chester Cup. I



W. A. Rouch.

MERRY METHODIST.

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a steeplechase by a soldier friend. She was rather lazy, and had to be roused once or twice in the course of the race.

Among the winning youngsters of the week I am inclined to place the Income colt first. He is beautifully bred, both to race and to stay. On his father's side he has an inheritance of stoutness and speed, while the rare quality of the Hermit blood comes through his dam Income. He is engaged in the Derby and St. Leger of 1901, but not in the Two Thousand Guineas. He is a good-looking chestnut colt of great promise, and might well grow into a Derby horse. S. Darling will give him every chance. A good deal has been written about the whims of horses *apropos* of Diamond Jubilee's aversion to M. Cannon. The Druid says that it is the general opinion among trainers that horses distinguish one person from another by the voice. Whether this is so or not the effect of a voice on horses is very notable. An instance of this occurs to me. A mare of my own was ridden in As a matter of fact, her rider only hit her twice. Some days afterwards he came into the stable with me and we went into the mare's box. The moment he spoke, the mare—a great favourite and usually good-tempered—whiskered round and dashed at him, and we had to leave the box in a hurry. Her ears were back and she looked "real nasty." VEDETTE.

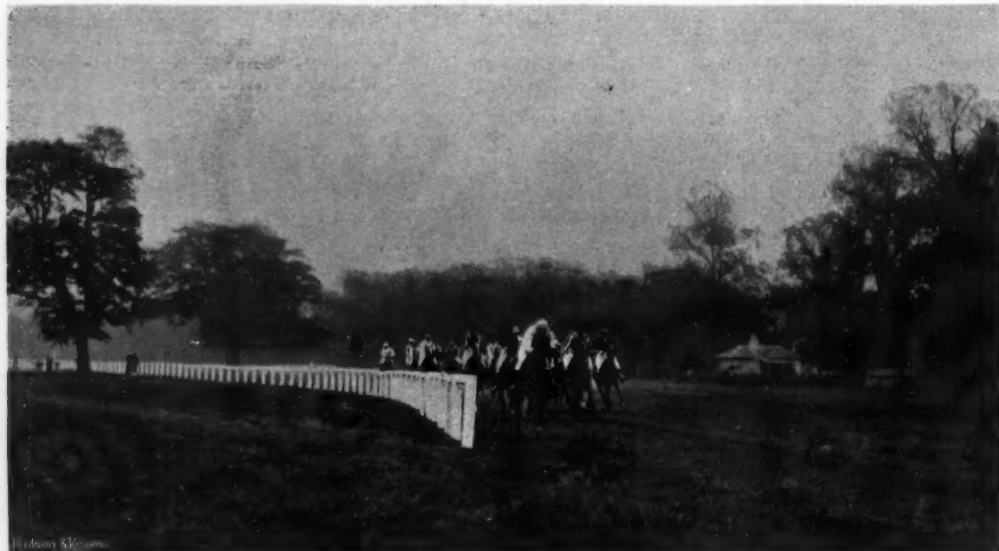


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MERRY METHODIST LEADS AT THE HALF-MILE.

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have always liked the horse, and do so still, and think that he was not himself on that day. One of the very simplest and best tests of a horse's condition is his eye. If that is full, clear, bright, and calm it is probably a sign that he is not overdone. If, on the other hand, the eye is wild and worried, the chances are the animal has had too much. One man told me that he went to look at the horse prepared to back him; he did not do so, thinking him overdone. But fit and well, Calveley is still a cup horse, I believe. Another horse that rather impressed me in the paddock was The Graft. He is ugly, but he has great scope, a good shoulder, long galloping quarters, and great depth through the heart. The City and Suburban was a coup no doubt, and there are circumstances connected with the race which do not redound to the credit of the Turf, and will not do so to the ultimate profit of those concerned. Once in conversation with a man supposed not to be over scrupulous, he explained his success by remarking "that whatever he had done he never put a pal in the cart," which is another way of saying that it is undesirable to make enemies on the Turf, as elsewhere. But to return. The Graft is no doubt a good horse, and in my racing experience no coup has ever been brought off without the assistance of a really good horse. Victor Wild, Winkfield's Pride, and Tyrant were all good horses. There have been plenty of coups planned which failed, because the horse was not good enough.

of members who have gone to South Africa more than the London or suburban ones. At Hurlingham, at Ranelagh, at Milton, and in the Household Brigade



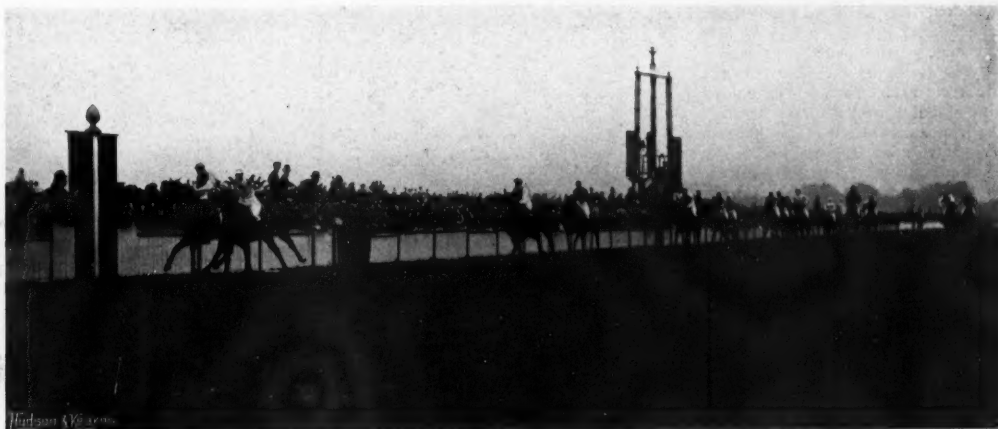
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WATCHING THE RACE.

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the death of Captain C. E. Rose, of the Royal Horse Guards, will be sincerely regretted. A sound polo player, a fine horseman over a country, and last, but not least, a good friend, Ernest Rose will long be remembered. A good soldier who sought opportunities of distinction, he has found a soldier's grave in Africa, and added his name to the splendid roll of heroes who have belonged to the "Oxford Blues." He is the second member of the Royal Horse Guards Polo Team who has died on service, and Major Victor Ferguson is not yet forgotten.

The past few days have been marked by some good polo and one unlucky accident. Mr. George Miller, who was riding a grey pony in the second ties of the Ranelagh Handicap tournament was galloping for the ball in the last ten minutes, when the pony slipped up and came down on its side, and Mr. Miller falling on the point of his shoulder broke his collar-bone. This is unlucky, for so brilliant and sound a player can ill be spared this season, and Mr. George Miller's absence will distinctly lessen the interest felt in several leading matches. Mr. C. D. Miller, who was acting as umpire on Saturday, will be able to take the weight of management off his brother's shoulders. He will himself be a welcome addition to the strength of the polo players of this season. At Hurlingham,



W. A. Rouch.

JUBILEE STAKES: FINISH.

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the pavilion and galloped on Conceit, a flying chestnut, for the Putney goal. He had a shot, but the ball had too much pace and crossed the goal. Like lightning Lord Shrewsbury galloped after it and hit a back hander, placing the ball in the centre of the posts, when Mr. Cecil Nickalls tapped it through. The applause from the pavilion was deserved, and showed how well the spectators now appreciate really good play. When by degrees Wimbledon improved their position there was another fine stroke from Mr. Tom Drybrough, who, when galloping towards his adversaries' goal, cut the ball to his right most effectively. Again there was a very good and exciting bit of play when, after Sir Humphry de Trafford had repeatedly saved the Ranelagh goal by some fine cross shots, Mr. Drybrough hit a back-hander through the posts.

Another interesting moment was when, Mr. Cecil Nickalls securing the ball from his No. 3, the whole eight players raced down the ground for the Wimbledon goal, the ponies stretching away like miniature racehorses, and Mr. Cecil Nickalls leading on a bay that even in that company could not be caught. Just after half time Mr. F. J. Mackey began to show his last season's form, and once on the chestnut and more than once on the black he made some very fine runs. As the game went on, Wimbledon improved in combination and hitting, and in the sixth period went away twice with the ball from the umpire's throw in, and scored two consecutively and almost without opposition.

Another Wimbledon team was to have played Hurlingham on the ground of the former club at Southfields on Saturday, but unluckily the match fell through. For a young club like Wimbledon to be able to put teams in the field to play Hurlingham and Ranelagh on the same day is very creditable to the management.

The second match of the afternoon advanced the Handicap Tournament another stage, and a good game between C and F was marred by the accident to Mr. Miller, referred to above, and which took place when he was fighting a losing battle with great pluck, for C team won all the time, having Messrs. Buckmaster and Tresham Gilbey as No. 4 and No. 3 respectively, and they fit in with each other's play admirably, and in a handicap team it is most necessary that a fine player like Mr. Buckmaster should be able, even as No. 4, to go up into the game sometimes. Therefore No. 3 should be quick to drop back, and Mr. Tresham Gilbey is always ready to do that at the right moment, and has the ponies too, a necessary proviso. He also showed us a new pony, a black mare by Pearl Diver, which promises very well. The judges at Islington made no mistake when they gave Early Dawn the champion rosette, for she showed great speed on Saturday, and everyone knows she is good to look at. It will interest many polo players who have not forgotten old times to learn that Old Nimble has gone into Mr. John Barker's stud.

On Saturday the very interesting social club tournaments of Hurlingham will be finished. The Nimrod Club, at present holders of the Cup, is in a state of suspended animation, and I think the Pitt and the Wellington should



W. A. Rouch.

LEADING IN SIRENIA.

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Captain Daly was playing for the first time for four years. By the way, Captain Daly is one of the founders of the Four Counties Polo Club; this name is derived from the fact that the club is situated where four counties meet (Oxford, Warwick, Gloucester, and Worcester), and has its ground in Mr. Mitford's park at Batsford. Of the prosperity of the Wimbledon Polo Club I hear very good accounts, and as they have Mr. Tom Drybrough, the founder of the Edinburgh Polo Club, as adviser, they ought to succeed. They play very good polo at this club, as the team sent to Ranelagh last Saturday showed. On the whole, this was, I think, the best match of the week, and as it is impossible to do more than dwell on one match at any length, I cannot do better than write of Wimbledon v. Ranelagh, more particularly as it was the first important inter-club game of the season.

The Wimbledon men were Messrs. Baring, F. J. Mackey, Pattison Nickalls, and T. B. Drybrough, while Ranelagh had Captain Lambton, Mr. Cecil Nickalls, Lord Shrewsbury, and Sir Humphry de Trafford. They were both well-mounted teams, but four ponies played very well, Lord Shrewsbury's new brown Bayleaf, Mr. F. J. Mackey's two, a chestnut and a black, and Mr. Pattison Nickalls's grey. At first, with Mr. T. B. Drybrough still feeling the effects of a nasty fall the day before the match, and Mr. P. Nickalls somewhat out of practice, it is not surprising that Ranelagh was able to press. It was certainly owing to the steady defence of Wimbledon that Ranelagh did not make a score at first. Eventually they did make two goals in the first twenty minutes, the second one being the result of some beautiful play—thus Lord Shrewsbury had possession of the ball opposite



W. A. Rouch.

RACING NOTES: THE PADDOCK.

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fight out the final between them. The former, having a very wide field of choice, should be able to put such players as Messrs. Buckmaster and McCreery in the team. I have been also asked to say that the meet of the Automobile Club at Hurlingham for May 26th is cancelled. The Hurlingham Club rules and bye-laws, as well as the rules of the County Polo Association, both revised and brought up to date, are published in a very neat little book by the Hurlingham Club. It is impossible to give too much or too careful study to the rules of any game in which we are interested, and every polo player should carry one of these books in his pocket. Ladies, who are never forgotten at Ranelagh, are to have a driving competition in the club grounds on May 26th. Entries close on May 23rd. Lord Shrewsbury and Count de Madre will judge, a task which we need not envy them greatly. There will be the usual events, and, it is hardly necessary to say, if it is a fine day, a great assemblage. This is a competition which was started by the polo manager of the day at Ranelagh, and has always been well supported by the sisters and wives of polo players. Those who are interested in seeing good polo should be careful not to miss the hunt cup ties at Ranelagh next week. I should not be surprised if this tournament proved to be the best of the season.



W. A. Rouch.

CLUB LAWN.

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Advice and Advisers about . . Killing Driven Game.—V

HERETO the question of alignment of the shot-gun has been mostly considered because it is the safest starting-point for all shooters. First, perhaps, the steady aim with one eye closed; then, later, the two-eyed alignment, or muscular sense of the two eyes: these are the methods which school the hand and eyes to work together. With great practice shooters can afterwards get on without alignment, and some of them shoot by means of the muscular sense between hand and eyes alone. They may, or may not, get their eyes in such a position as to see along the gun, but if they do so without correcting the presentation by alignment they are none the less shooting by muscular sense between hand and eye.

Leaving aside the muscular-sense shooter, who adopts a position to enable him to align and instruct his hands for their future guidance with every shot fired, there are a great number of possible faults, due to eyesight, which apply to the shooter who does not get his eyes into position where it is possible to align. These shooters often find that they have a tendency to put up the gun in such a way that when shooting from the right shoulder they hit to the left of the mark. They are told that this is because the left is the "master eye," and they are advised (1) to align with the right eye, shutting the left, or else (2) to have a cross-eyed stock, so as to align from the left eye; and other advice is (3) to have



Photo.

RACING NOTES: MR. COVENTRY EXPLAINS THE GATE. Copyright

a certain amount of cast-off so as to shoot more to the right than they think they are shooting; (4) they are told to use a Gilbert sight, which will prevent the left eye seeing the fore sight. A shooter who has the choice of these evils is to be pitied. Some kind friend is certain to make him more unhappy still by suggesting the ring trial for the strongest eye. Possibly the ring surrounds the left eye's line of sight, and if so the case is said to be hopeless without one or other of the above alterations.

Everyone who has ever written on this subject falls into one error; they invariably state that the ring will be brought up to one or other line of sight,

but they never bring it up between the two. Possibly it never occurred to them that a man might align with his nose. That is, get his nose, the ring, and the object aimed at in one straight line. That comes of only a partial study of the question. There are plenty of people willing to give advice, but I do not believe that there is any man who understands all about the eyes in connection with the gun even yet. It has been vastly discussed; it interests thousands of shooters; it has been settled thousands of times; it is not settled yet. Possibly the majority of shooters will not believe in nose alignment, but if they will take the necessary trouble they can satisfy themselves that it is possible; they can place themselves in such a condition as to be absolutely unable to do anything else. This is not merely a curiosity, but a means whereby a man may detect fault in his own eyesight and probably cure them. The orthoptic spectacles sold by Mr. Gregory in the Strand are, as possibly everyone knows, clear glass for one eye, and a pin hole, in size increased or decreased at will, through a black wooden block in front of the right eye. To a man who habitually brings the experimental ring or the pointer up to the right eye it will be a revelation to put on a pair of these spectacles, screw the aperture down small, and then try the experiment. It is so to me that it will be a case of nose alignment. But it is curious to observe that three parts of the light may be blocked out from the right eye, before the left begins to have any effect in drawing over the aim towards the nose. Of course, it is possible with these spectacles on to hunt for and find the correct alignment. That has nothing to do with the matter. Whether the shooter is one who sees where his gun points, or one who does not, it is presentation that tells. Without true first presentation of the weapon a man's time will be so slow, that he will never become a good shot until he has corrected the fault; so that this question interests the man who aligns—even him who shuts his left eye and aligns, as much as it does those who hold the head erect, and never are, at any time, in a position to align. All of them, to shoot even moderately well, must bring up the gun correctly without any necessity for correction before they pull trigger. There is no time for right or left correction at a driven bird. It is quite enough to have to race the bird to an ever-advancing point in front of him, for this point must be reached simultaneously with the shot leaving the barrel, not merely with the decision to pull trigger. It is in practice, therefore, quite impossible to correct the aim for that shot; all alignment can do is to instruct the hands to behave better next time. It has already been pointed out that the right eye may be so bad as to be unable to see the game, and that all the time it may be what is called the "master eye." The curious point of the matter is this, when orthoptic spectacles are put on, such a right eye defines objects at a distance better, sees them clearly where it could not see them at all before, and by this very improvement ceases to be the "master eye," and allows the left to drag the aim to a nose alignment. It does not do, therefore, to say that the strongest eye is necessarily the "master eye." It may be a great deal the worst, and yet, from habit, control the aim. It may even have less than half the light enter it and yet control the aim; but there is a point of darkness when this habit is interfered with. Consequently it is possible that when the left eye has the habit of dragging over the barrels, an orthoptic spectacle over the left optic will set the matter right, and gradually teach the right to acquire the habit. Some little time ago the writer suggested this method of cure to a shooter whose left eye dragged over the barrels nosewards, taking care to explain the reason at the same time. The shooter gratefully accepted the advice, but evidently never listened to the reason, or perhaps the explanation was not as clear as it might have been. On being asked "What progress?"

the sportsman complained that he shot worse than ever, but it was afterwards found that he had used the spectacles in the manner suggested by the maker, and thus partially blocked up the right eye instead of the left, whereby he had probably shot much more to the left of everything than before. The spectacles, of course, have to be put on upside down for the purpose indicated.

Returning to the four cures generally suggested for a left "master eye" as it is called. (1) To align with the right eye and closing the left. It cannot be said that this is the sudden cure expected by its advocates. The force of habit will, for a time, probably overcome everything. If a right-eyed and shouldered

man shuts the right eye and brings up the gun sharp, the sight will want much correction before it will come into line with the left eye. It will be a matter of time before the habit of left aim can be overcome so as to require no after adjustment of the gun after it is at the shoulder. (2) To have a cross-eyed stock so as to align from the left will probably cure, but if the shooter has for some years shot by muscular sense of hand and eye, it may be that he will continue to bring up even the cross-eyed stock in nose alignment, and, if so, again there will be the necessity for after-correction. (3) To have a certain amount of cast-off, so as to shoot more to the right without alignment than the shooter thinks he is shooting. This is the worst possible plan. It costs a new stock, probably a less suitable one; moreover, from the day it comes home the shooter will be unconsciously striving to get it to shoot to the same place as his last gun did. When a much cast-off stock is first handled it comes up greatly to the right, but soon the shooter becomes used to it and points with it as he in ends to aim—in fact, he finds that the thing he is aiming with is not straight, and ceases to aim as if it were so. (4) A Gilbert sight which prevents the left eye seeing the fore-sight is perhaps the best of the four, but even this is not perfect by any means. It prevents alignment by the left eye of sight and game it is true, but for a long time it has little effect on the way the gun is brought up to the shoulder—that is, at first there has to be more or less correction of aim.

Of the cast-off stock it may be said that it is wilful self-deception that will soon be discovered and negated. If, instead of teaching the muscular senses, it is desired to make the best of them as they are, it would be more in accord with science to make the barrels point where the rib does not point. This is done in a way already, as, in order to counteract gravity on the shot pellets, the barrels point higher than the rib. The shooter would never find this out by the act of shooting, and perhaps if the foresight was set slightly nearer the left barrel than the right this would be the best way at once to permanently retain a fault and negative its effect. That is, if the left eye drags the barrel to the left, the position of the foresight might be made to negative the dragging over, so that when the sight was dragged over the barrels pointed correctly.

It is so easy to spend both time and money in the wrong direction, in gun-fitting and shooting schools, that it is best for a shooter to know all about his own eyesight before going to them. At most the shooting school experts can tell the effect only when the cause of fault lies in the eyes, as it generally does. They cannot tell what the defect in the eyesight is half as well as the shooter himself, and, of course, until the cause is known any suggested cures are leaps in the dark, that is when they are not merely intended to counteract the effect by rendering permanent the fault.

All trials and cures with the try-gun are to be suspected of a tendency to the above fault. They, and the new guns built to them, make the shot go right in spite of a constant fault in the shooter, but only until he gets used to the new bend and cast-off. It should never be forgotten that the gun fitter should be concerned with the make and shape of a shooter's body, and that if he is asked to cure a fault of the eyes as well, he is likely enough to find a conflict of requirements which is impossible to deal with satisfactorily. In their places try-guns are excellent—so are shooting schools; but a try-gun cannot make a man shoot at the right image of a bird when his brain sees two; and it is just as absurd to try and alter the muscular sense between hand and eye by means of cast-off and bend. Some of the very best gunmakers, and one of the best experts at a shooting school, do not use the try-gun. ARGUS OLIVE.

P.S.—I have just had a chance of inspecting a little invention that will be of the utmost use to shooters. It is practically a wooden and metal sling for throwing claybirds. There seems to be no doubt about it that it will, by its convenience, hit the orthodox traps very hard. It throws with even more power than the traps—or than most of them, does not break the birds, and any country boy who can throw a stone is able with it to send rocketers off the top of a hay rick, or from the other side of it, such as will try the skill even of quick game shots.



TOMATO GROWING IN POTS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am glad to see that you are anxious to assist readers in difficulties about their gardens, and let me say that this is important, as to the beginner gardening is by no means easy. I have some tomato plants established in 5-in. pots. Will you please tell me the treatment necessary, and also of some seedlings I have in the seed-pans, which I intend to plant out of doors?—M. R.

[You must pot on the plants now established in 5-in. pots, or plant them out in houses if you have this convenience, as vacant places upon trellises may well be made profitable by growing such things as tomatoes. Peach houses may well be utilised, as the tomatoes succeed very well in the summer under the same atmospheric conditions. Give sufficient space. It is a mistake to so crowd the plants that they become drawn, 2ft. apart being one too much. Far better to give ample space than resort to the practice of shortening the stems and removing the foliage. Add soil to those plants which have made sufficient roots to thoroughly ferment the material already supplied. Much depends, however, upon whether the plots are very luxuriant. If so, wait until some of their vigour is exhausted, as the flowers do not set well when the plants

are unduly strong. Pot off the seedlings in the seed pans into 5in. pots. Shade them from brilliant sun for a few days, and those in 3in. pots, also intended for planting out, must be potted into thirty-two's or 6in. size. Afterwards grow them on sturdily in a light airy position, and guard against giving too much water. Successful outdoor summer culture greatly depends upon the plants being strong. The first truss of flowers should be ready to open at the time of planting, which should be early in June, or the latter part of May in mild localities.—ED.]

WIRE NETTING ENCLOSURES FOR FRUIT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Every year more people seem to be impressed, and very rightly impressed, with the value of wire netting enclosures over strawberries, gooseberries, cur ants, and any kind of low growing fruit. Of course its primary object is to keep off the birds, for which purpose the meshes of the netting have to be small, and no doubt one gets an immense deal more fruit under this protection than when the plants and shrubs are left unprotected. But at the same time it ought to be realised that though the birds are sad robbers at one time of year, that is to say, when the trees are yielding fruit, so that it is advisable to sue every device for keeping them away, yet at another time of year they are the greatest benefactors, viz., in the winter, when their chief food is insects. By the ordinary method of having the wire netting right over the roof of the enclosure there is no possible admission for the birds at any time, and the plants under the netting are apt to get very badly overrun by insects. To obviate this, my own plan, that I will venture to recommend, is to have the walls of the enclosure made of the fixed wire netting, as usual, but instead of the wire netting roof to have ordinary old fishing net thrown over. This keeps the birds out perfectly, and can be removed without any trouble after the fruit-bearing time has passed, thus letting the birds in to do their good work and keeping them out from doing their bad. Moreover, it is a plan that has the further advantage that this past winter has proved convincingly to many a gardener all over the country. On the small meshed horizontal wire netting roof the snow is apt to pack itself so heavily that many an enclosure of the kind has been utterly ruined this winter. Of course when the rope netting is taken off the horizontal wire sides will not suffer at all from the snow. From every point of view it appears to me that the ordinary fishing net over the roof is the right thing; and I hope you will forgive the perhaps tedious length at which I have dwelt on its merits.—E. G.

TREATMENT OF MELONS IN FLOWER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am a beginner in gardening, and am growing some melons for the first time. All has gone well so far, and the plants are in flower now. It is from this stage onwards I should like advice about. One has to master so many details of culture that your guidance will be especially welcome, as failure is neither pleasant nor profitable.—M.

[The plants should be gone over about noon daily for the purpose of fertilisation, and at this stage do not give more water than is absolutely essential to promote growth. Cease syringing for the time, and whilst the sun shines upon the house give judicious ventilation, with a liberal amount of heat in the hot-water pipes. All the atmosphere moisture necessary may be derived from damping the house upon fine days, and then in the afternoon only. Training and stopping of the shoots is a simple process. Allow one main stem to grow until it has reached the required distance up the trellis and produced sufficient side shoots to cover the allotted space. Side shoots reaching the trellis should be pinched off. Those upon the trellis must be pinched, if they do not show fruit, leaving one joint. In the case of those upon which fruit has appeared leave two joints beyond the fruit. Pinch second side shoots or laterals to one leaf, that is when there is space for them, otherwise remove altogether. The plants must be frequently looked over to prevent a thicket of foliage, and always use the finger and thumb, not a knife. For this reason it is essential to stop the shoots when quite young. Beginners are often puzzled to know how many fruits to leave upon each plant. Much, of course, depends upon the trellis space allotted to each, and the size the fruits attain when ripe. A very good rule is to have one fruit to each 3ft. spread of foliage on the trellis. In thinning out leave the most promising fruits. Melons are heavy, and when the fruit strains the vine support must be given with raffia or nets made for the purpose. When the fruit is set give water freely, with an occasional dose of liquid manure, gradually withholding root moisture when ripening commences. Guard against stagnant atmosphere, which promotes canker. Syringe thoroughly once on fine days, choosing the afternoon, for the purpose of keeping red spider in check, and at other times to maintain a growing atmosphere damp bare surfaces.—ED.]

GOATS FOR MILK.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I shall be very glad if any information can be given about the keeping of goats in England. Is their milk as good and as pleasant as that of cows, and can butter and cheese be made from it? What kind of goat is the most profitable to keep and has the least unpleasant smell (some goats are so very strong and unpleasant)? At Church, near Farnham, in Surrey, there are several large flocks of very fine goats kept by private individuals. Are these for any special purpose? I venture to say some papers on the breeding and keeping of goats would be very generally interesting. So many people could keep a goat who could not manage the necessary accommodation for a cow.—BUSINESS.

[Analysis shows that the milk of goats is richer than that of cows. It varies a good deal even in the individual animal, but, speaking roughly, when good it contains about 7 per cent. of fat, the proportion in ordinary dairy milk being about 3.5 per cent., though the milk of a first-rate Jersey contains as much as 5.5 per cent. of fat. The other difference lies in the albuminous matter being rather less in the goat's milk than in the cow's. The milk-sugar is much alike in both, and the caseine does not differ much. It is agreeable to drink and very suitable to children and invalids. Butter and cheese can be made from it, but the results will probably fail to give satisfaction. Swiss goats having long been kept for milking purposes may be recommended, particularly those from the Toggenburg Valley. The offensive smell comes entirely from the billy-goat, the keeping of which is not necessary, as the females can be sent to a stud of pedigree goats. Several goat fanciers live near Farnham, in particular Mr. Bryan Hook, who, besides being an artist, is also an importer, breeder, and exhibitor of goats. It was probably his herd you saw. Thanks for your last suggestion; we published an article on this subject on April 8th, 1899.—ED.]

A VIXEN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I thought the enclosed photograph of a vixen might be of interest to you. It was taken with the West Somerset Foxhounds. The fox having gone to ground it was dug for, as is customary with this hunt, foxes being plentiful, but on being found to be a vixen was let go.—H. M. LOMAS.



FRUIT FARMING IN ITALY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—A few weeks ago a question was asked in COUNTRY LIFE about fruit farms in Italy. I am told that such establishments do exist, but have not yet received any information as to their situation, nor what fruits are grown on them. I have lived a good many years in Italy and certainly cannot recommend Englishmen to try fruit farming or any other enterprise in the country. Here are one or two facts which speak for themselves: About twenty to twenty-five years ago some friends in South Italy grew choice globe artichokes. When they were sent to market a less price was offered for them because they were not exactly like ordinary artichokes. Some fifteen years ago other English people grew vegetables for sale, but gave it up, as the taxation was so heavy that all profit was swallowed up. In an olive-growing district an Englishman lately set up a good oil press worked by a steam-engine. He found he could profitably crush more fruit than he grew, so he bought fruit from the neighbours. When he only crushed his own olives he was charged one tax, when he bought his neighbours' produce to crush he was charged a far higher tax, which was prohibitive. In Italy you never know what taxes will be suddenly imposed, the mere fact of an undertaking being a success causes the Government to tax it heavily. It is apparently incapable of perceiving that by such means it nips all enterprise and improvement in the bud, and in fact kills the goose that lays the golden eggs.—SAMBO.

PLANTING A BANK.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I should be much obliged if you could give me some information about brooms. I have got some seedlings of the white one, and am very anxious to put them in a bank composed of clay principally, very poor soil, where hardly anything will grow. Do you think that they could do there, or could you or some of your readers suggest anything else? Daffodils and primroses grow well in it. Grass does not. Acting upon advice given in your most useful paper, I have succeeded very well with gardening in grass this spring; but are there no suitable flowers to bloom in grass and among shrubberies without care in summer?—T. W. B.

[Brooms are exactly the kind of shrubs to plant upon a rough bank where little else will grow. It is a pity that these delightful shrubs, so free flowering, and adapting themselves to dry hungry banks, are not more generally planted. The roots go down deeply, hence in dry soils the shrubs are less disturbed by seasons of drought. Brooms, white, and the other kinds may be planted, such as the white Spanish broom, the later yellow-flowered *Cytisus nigricans*, the May-flowering *C. praecox*, a mass of sulphur-coloured blossoms, and of course the common *C. scoparius*, the yellow broom of waste lands and commons. You could make your bank very beautiful with other shrubs also. Miss Jekyll, in the *Garden* a few weeks ago, gave much interesting information about making a hedgerow bank beautiful. Miss Jekyll mentioned that foremost will come the cluster roses of the Ayrshire and *Sempervirens* and allied groups, and of these probably the best of all are the garland rose and Dundee Rambler, both loving a place where they can fling out their long flower-laden branches. *Rosa lucida*, of more bushy growth, is also a capital bank plant, and Scotch briars must be planted freely. Both of these pretty things, though they appear at first to make little growth, are feeling their way underground, and within two years they will have forced their strong suckers through the sides of the bank; and while their running roots help to bind it together, their pretty heads will hang out and adorn the space almost to the ground level with a surprising quantity of bloom. These are planted so as to join in with some of the whitethorn groups, so that in winter they shall all show a delightfully related mass of comfortable colouring of warm pinkish-purple and rosy-brown, merging into a top and shoulder planting of *Berberis Aquifolium*. This also will in time grow through the sides of the bank. As brilliant incidents in this region will come some *Forsythia suspensa* throwing out their long flower-laden sprays over and among the stiffer branches of the dark Barberry. Then will come a group of *Pyrus japonica* and a good stretch of Japan honeysuckle and *Clematis flammula*, two plants that grow through and into another in the happiest fashion. Two brambles will be conspicuous ornaments in our hedge; the parsley-leaved with its bountiful crop of fruit, and the double-flowered, both pink and white. These will want quite a long stretch of space. Then in order to break what might be a monotony of trailing growths we must have something of bushy and upright habit. So then we get gorses and brooms. One side of the bank faces south-east, and for the greater part of the day is in full sun. Here we must not forget the beautiful *Rosa Wichuriana*, probably the best of the sun-loving trailers among roses, delighting in a warm place where it can hang over and make a living curtain of neat glossy leaf and clear-looking white bloom. A Guelder rose or two will be fine in the bank, and if a good length of it has the common traveller's joy (*Clematis Vitalba*) running over the thorns and billowing about on its own account, it could scarcely be clothed in any more becoming garments.

The bushes and plants named will be quite enough, when well grown, for a length of bank of 300yds. or 400yds. Many more plants could be named, but in such a planting a certain restriction in the number of kinds will give much better plant-pictures. Some other kinds of plants would be added, such as a few of the bolder of the hardy ferns, at the foot or lower parts of the cool sides, and successional sowings of foxgloves and the best mulleins, also on the shady side, and hellebores, columbines, and primroses, while at the bank's sunny foot acanthuses would be happy and most of the flag-leaved irises. Such bank gardens should be more often made and planted, for there is no end to the beautiful pictures that may be designed and enjoyed, to say nothing of having all the delightful things within easy range of sight and scent, and of presenting the added interest of flitting of butterfly and nesting of bird, also at the most comfortable and convenient of observation levels. In addition to a judicious planting of double and single gorse and broom, common gorse seed and that of the wild yellow broom and the white one from Portugal should be sown. In three years' time these sown plants, having thrust in their deep roots without the check of transplantation, will probably catch up and even overtake the planted ones of the same kind. Yes, you might certainly plant Japanese roses in the bank. With regard to grass gardening in summer, if you refer to COUNTRY LIFE of May 5th, you will find further notes upon the subject.—ED.]

KILLING DRIVEN GAME.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have read your interesting articles by "Argus Olive" with much pleasure, and I think his advice will prove of great use to me next season. Like, probably, some of your readers, I find it very difficult to judge the correct distance to allow "in front" of the driven pheasant, and although in company with one or two expert shots, they never seem able to give any definite idea of the distance they allow—they say it is the "knack." Anything going away from me, and that I can get "behind," seems quite easy compared with driven game. I wear shooting glasses, and find when rook-shooting that firing from the left shoulder and eye that the execution is good, but directly I attempt with the right eye and shoulder the shot from my rifle goes about five inches to the left. This is after several visits to the best oculists, so that I am a good deal like the Irish sportsman "Argus Olive" mentions—a good shot if the right eye is bandaged. Perhaps some of your readers would kindly give some advice on the distance you should allow in front of driven partridges, and if it is possible to have a gun made to shoot from the right shoulder and use the left eye.—H. T. P.

["H. T. P." cannot, we think, have seen all the articles by "Argus Olive." In one of them it was stated that some equally good shots make various statements about the distances they aim in front of driven game. One man says that he only just leads the beak of the birds, another says he aims the length of a pheasant in front, and a third that he leads the bird by 9ft. or more. All these men can shoot well, and it is clear that they do not see the same. The explanation was given in one of the earlier of the four articles on "Advice and Advisers about Killing Driven Game." The point of the articles has been the danger of one person giving advice to another who sees differently. There is no doubt that a partridge requires leading from 8ft. to 20ft., and even more, at 40yds. distance, according to the pace it is going. No one denies that; but what no two persons agree about is how much of the distance allowed in front can be seen by the shooter. There is a possibility of reducing the actual allowance in front by reason of the double spread of the shot, that is, the spread in the circular pattern, and also the elongated spread between the muzzle and the game. The shot goes up in a column varying in length according to distance and gun, and this reduces the allowance in front that is absolutely necessary by about 5ft. at the long ranges. This subject is treated at great length, with diagrams, in "Experts on Guns and Shooting" (Sampson Low). These show the bird entering the column of shot, and leaving it when various allowances have been made. But whatever allowance is made, it must be accompanied by "swing." A cross-eyed stock can be made by any maker which will enable you to shoot from the right shoulder and the left eye. Possibly a Gilbert sight would save the trouble and do equally well. The one we mean (there are several) is made to hide the foresight from the left eye.—ED.]



THRUSH NESTING IN WALL.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am sending you some photographs of a song thrush sitting on her nest in what I think a very curious place—a hole in an old wall. She sits so close, that I can get my camera quite near her, and was able to take her without a shutter. Also I send you a photograph of the carriage drive through fir trees to our house at Loch Dochart, Perthshire. Hoping that you may be able to make use of these pictures.—ARTHUR PLACE.

[We are sorry to be unable to use the photograph of the avenue, which is quite good, but of no special interest. The nest of the thrush is, however, placed in a position which we have never before known that bird to choose.—ED.]